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- ABDUL SATTAR EDHI

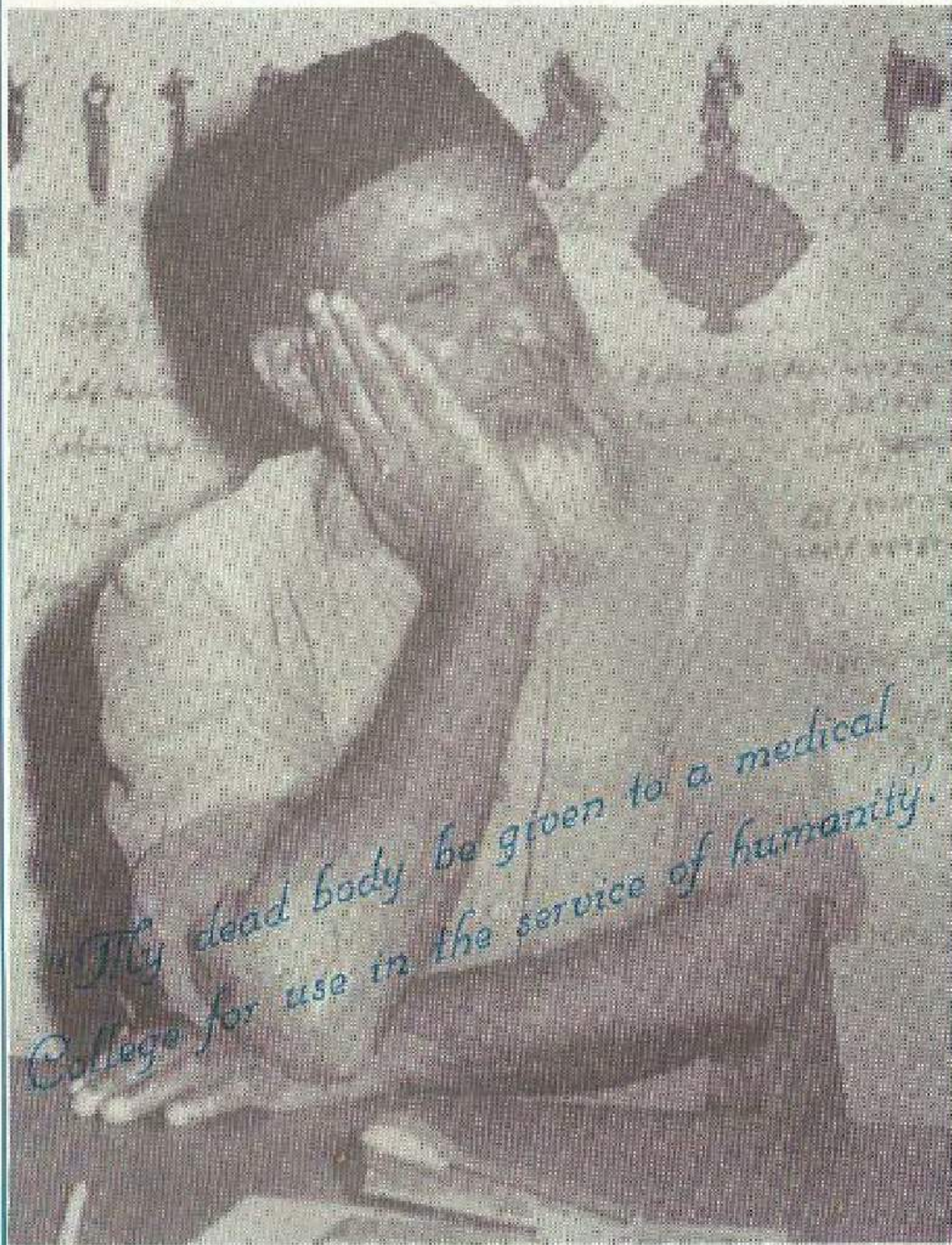


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# EDHI



*"My dead body be given to a medical  
College for use in the service of humanity."*

by



DEDICATED

TO

NAWAB RASHID ALI KHAN

Nawab Rashid Ali Khan, presently Minister for Health, Government of Sind, immediately after assumption of office, announced that he would regularly donate his monthly salary to Edhi Trust. In this age of materialism, this is a very commendable act on the part of a Minister and shows the trust that he reposes in that institution. Persons like him who value the services of organizations that are honestly and sincerely working for the benefit of humanity, and who furnish proof of their confidence in them in such a manner, deserve our whole-hearted appreciation and respect.

Title of Book: E D H I

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First Edition: Nov. 1987

Second Edition: Dec. 1987

Printed by: New Islamia  
Printing Press, Karachi

PRICE

Rs. 50.00  
(in Pakistan)

U.S. \$ 5.00  
(other countries)

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## MEHRAN PRESS INTERNATIONAL

### AT A GLANCE

Mehran Press International (MPI) was established in 1985. It has as its main objective the publication of books on personalities and institutions that have distinguished themselves in the field of social service, during the lifetime of such individuals. As a first step in that direction, it has published in 1986 a book in Urdu on Maulana Edhi entitled "Mualana Edhi---A Personality, a Character", and another "A Spark in the Dark" on Mr. Francis X. Lobo, Chairman, Pakistan Red Crescent Society, Sind. This year (1987) another book on Maulana Edhi, now in your hands, has been published simultaneously in five languages: English, Arabic, Urdu, Sindhi and Gujrati.

About 35 notable individuals and institutions of Karachi engaged in social service are the subject of another 300-page book "Burning Tournches", expected to be published early next year (1988).

MPI will InshaAllah continue to bring out publications about people who are playing an active and noteworthy role in the field of social service.

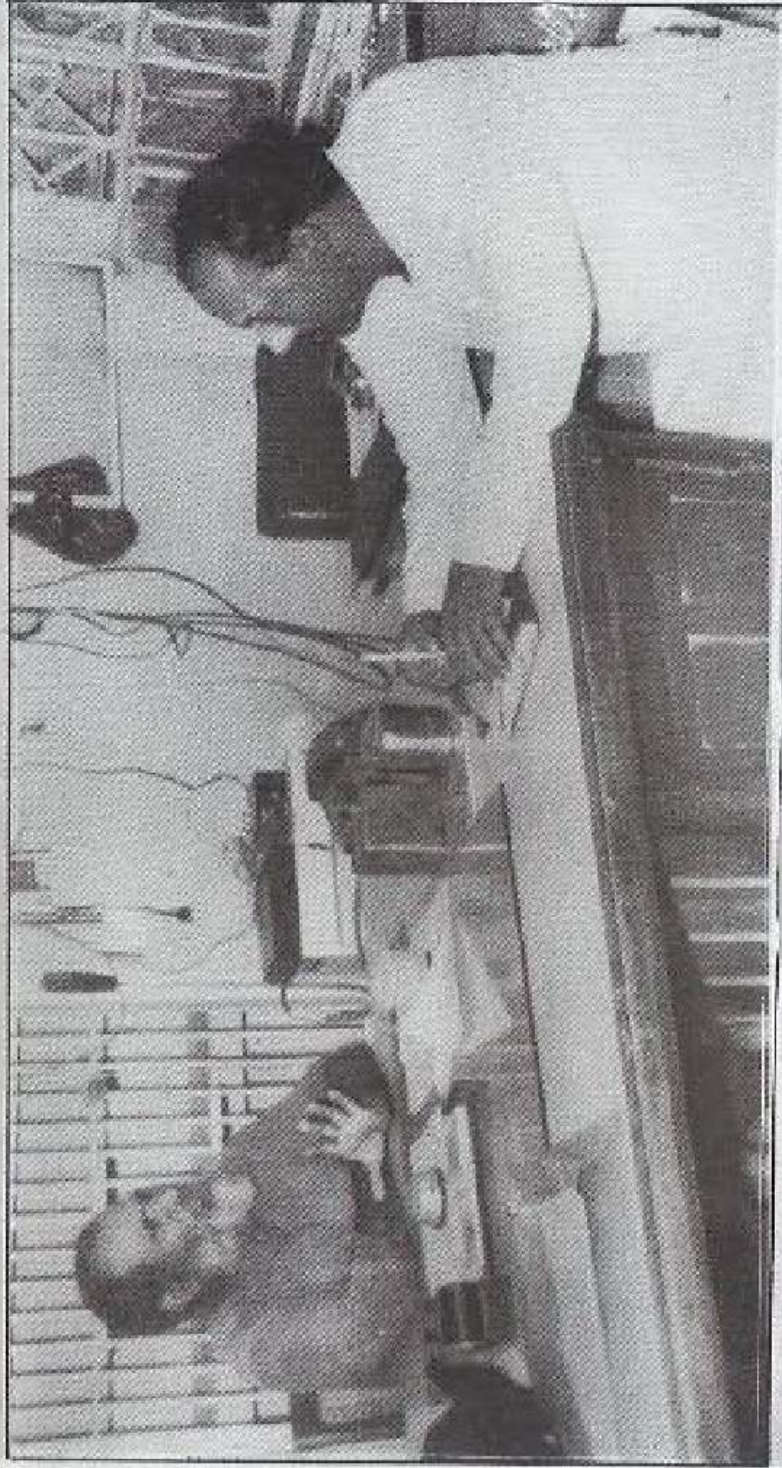
Now, by the Grace of God, MPI has internationally launched a feature service. The International Feature Service of Pakistan (IFSOP) will supply features, gratis, internationally as well as within Pakistan.



## F O R E W O R D

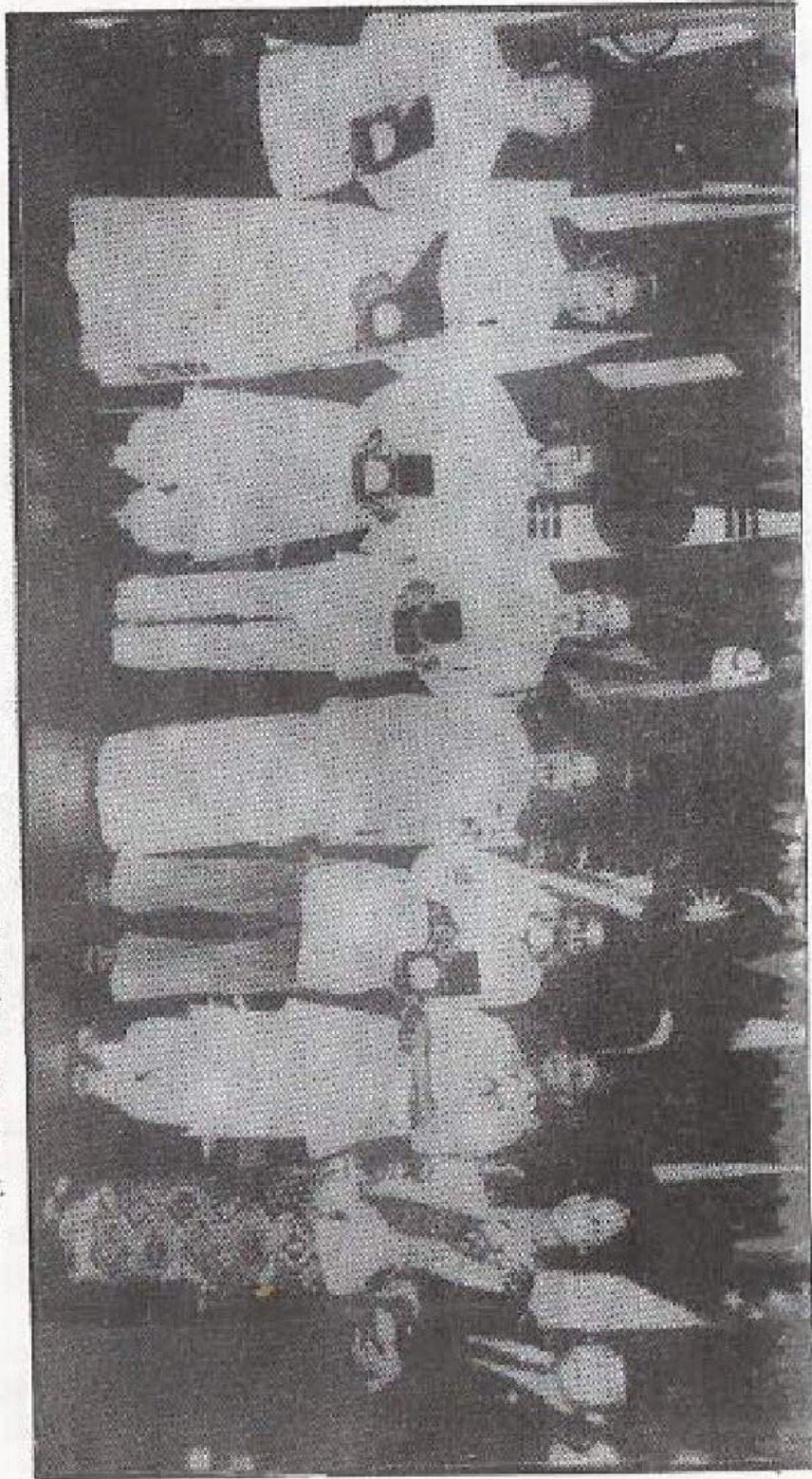
The subject of this book is not an angel but a human being and that human being is one who has dedicated his life to the service of fellow human beings. Abdus Sattar Eshi has been in the field of social service for the past 38 years, but my first opportunity to meet him was only three years back, in 1984. Being much younger in age, it is hardly possible for me to encompass the long span of time he has spent serving the cause of humanity.

In 1986 I published a book on him entitled "Maulana Edhi---A Personality, a Character". To collect factual material for it, I spent quite a few months observing him and his work and visiting the various social service centres set up by him. During all those visits, he never offered me even one cup of tea. For the preparation of this book, now in your hands, which is being published after about a year and a half, simultaneously in five languages, ENGLISH, ARABIC, URDU, SINDHI and GUJRATI, many more visits had to be made to his office and to the Centres, often in his company. However, I always found him the same, unchanging Edhi. Since this might give some readers the impression that he is rather uncourteous, I must hurry to say that he has so moulded his life as to refrain from drinking tea at any of his Centres or offering it to any of his visitors. This is just one of the principles of his clean and honest life. That is why his attitude did not give rise to any complaint on my part. On the contrary, it added to the regard and respect I had for him in my heart. During my journalistic life, I have had several occasions to interview people belonging to the field of social service but never have I met one like Abdus Sattar Edhi.



Abdus Sattar Edhi talking with the Executive  
Editor of Mehran Press International





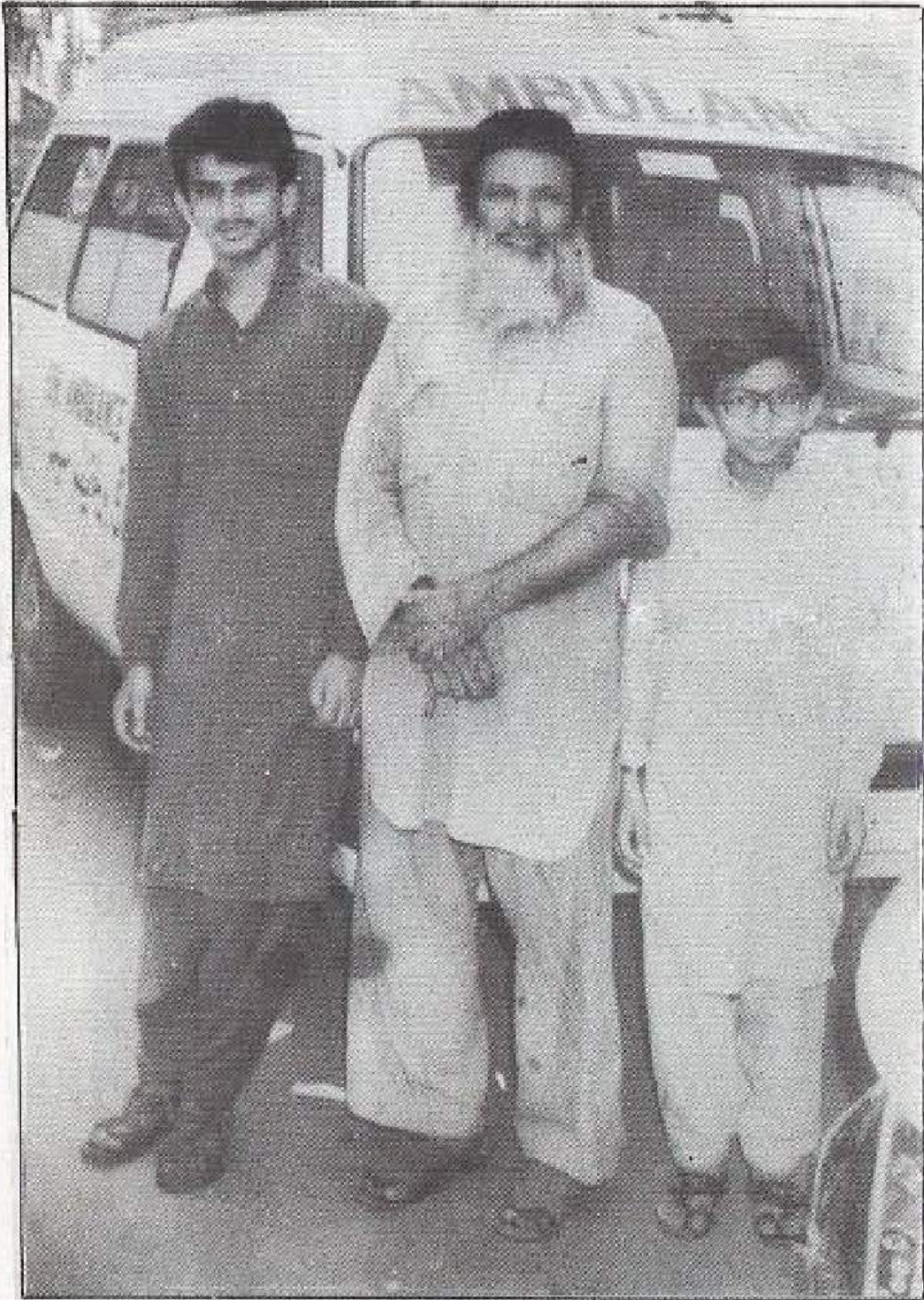
Abdus Sattar Edhi and Bilqees Edhi among the recipients of Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service in Manila.





Bilqees Edhi.





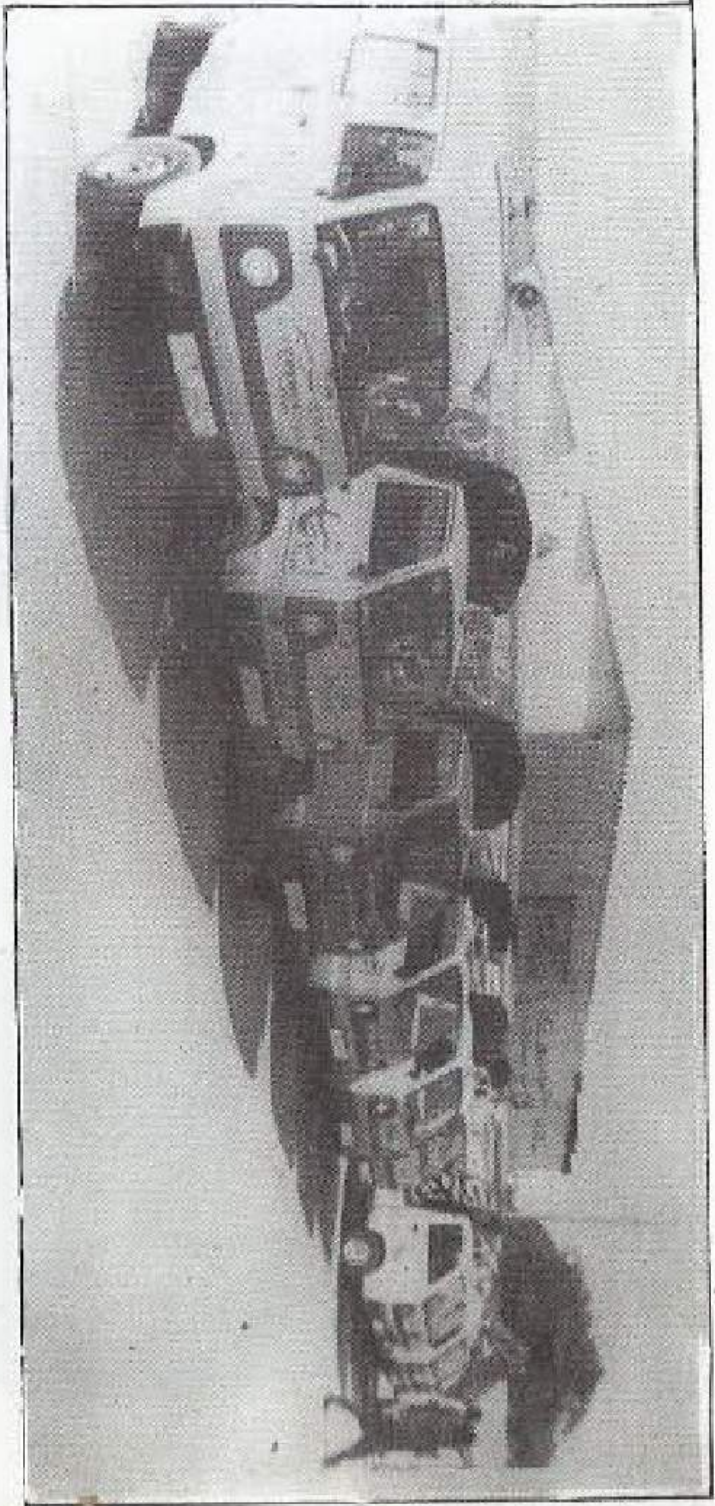
Abdus Sattar Edhi with his sons, Qutb and Faisal.



✓ Edhi as a young man. ✓







Ambulances at the Emergency Centre.

7



Abdus Sattar Edhi





Bilqees Edhi shortly before her marriage.



A hostel for training 2,000 girls under construction in Buffer Zone, Karachi. Expected to be completed in 1988 at a cost of Rs.5,00,00,000.00.





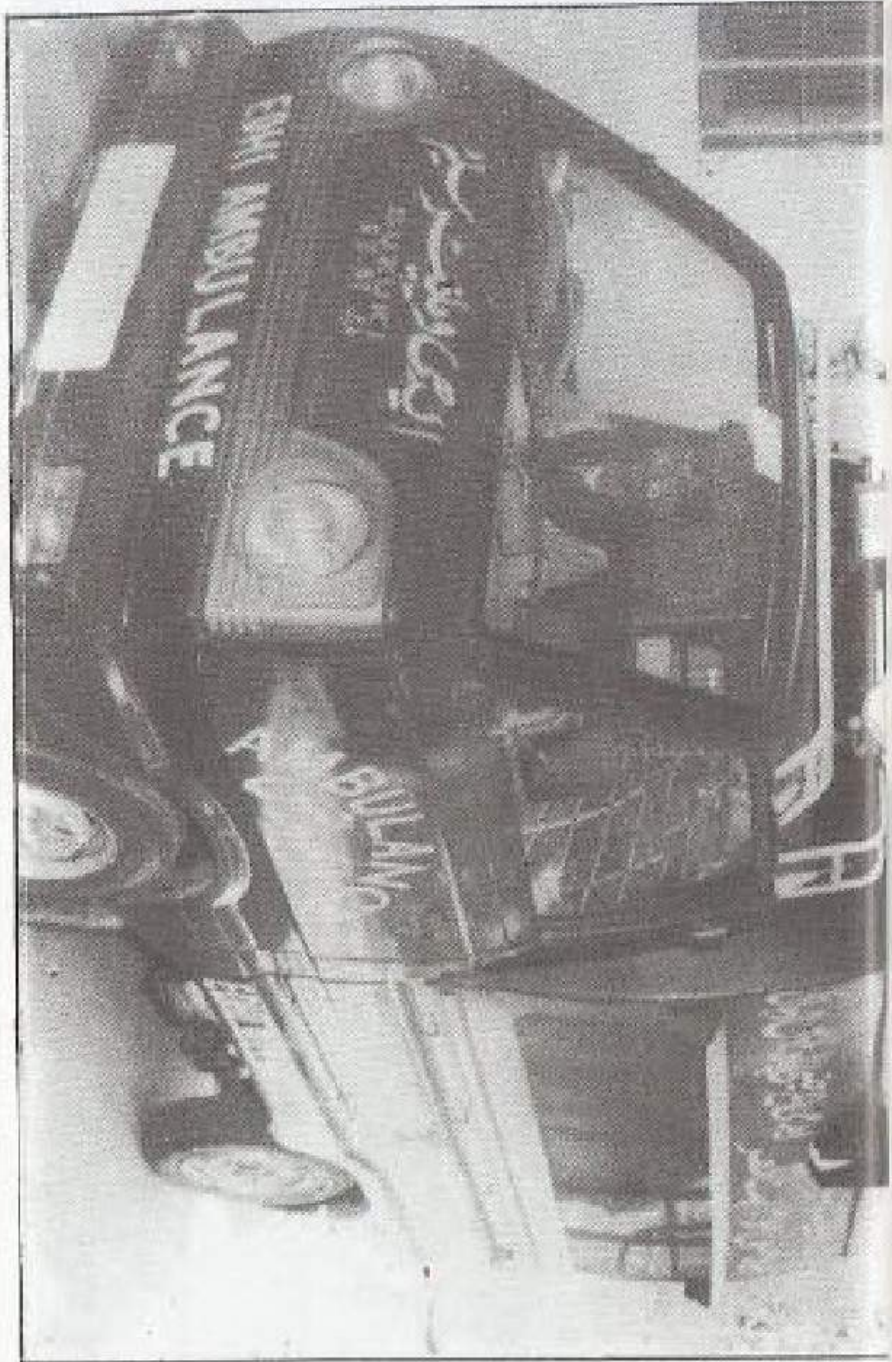
Go t given as "Sadaqah" (Charity) seen at  
Sohrab Goth Centre. Their meat is used to  
feed the poor, the sick and the decrepit.



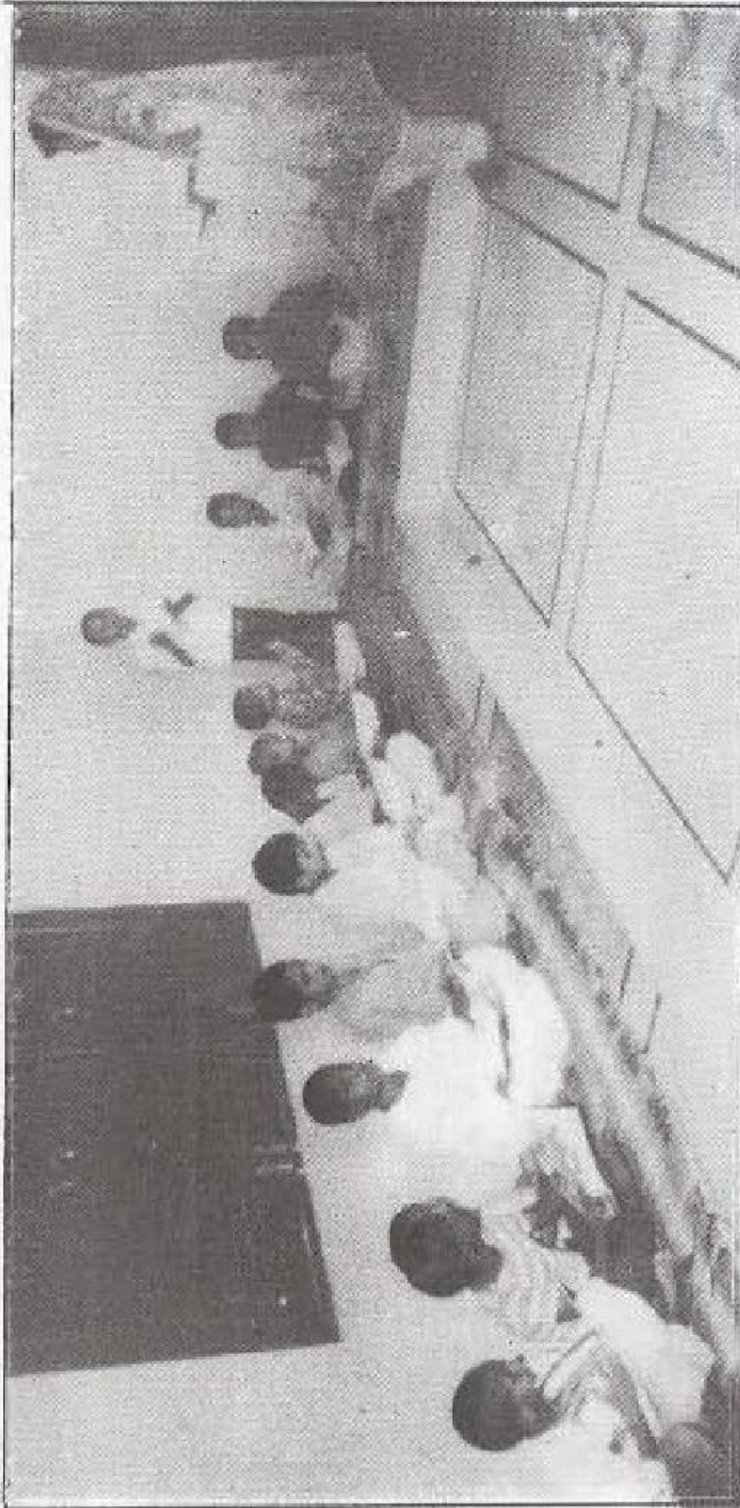


Bilqees Edhi's mother, Rabiya Hajiani, who has been working as a nurse in Maulana Edhi's establishment, is seen here attending to a patient.



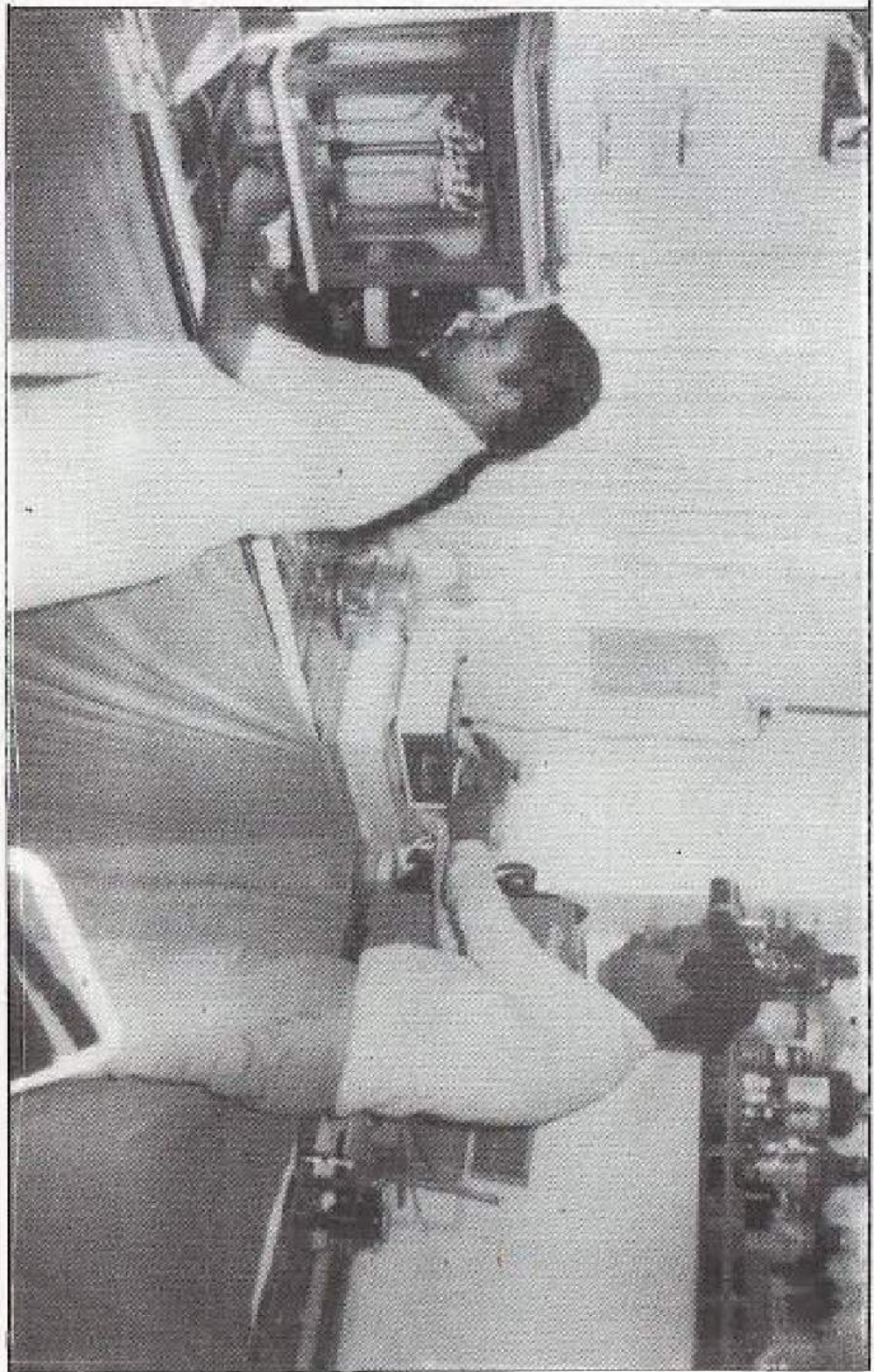


A girl worker driving an ambulance.



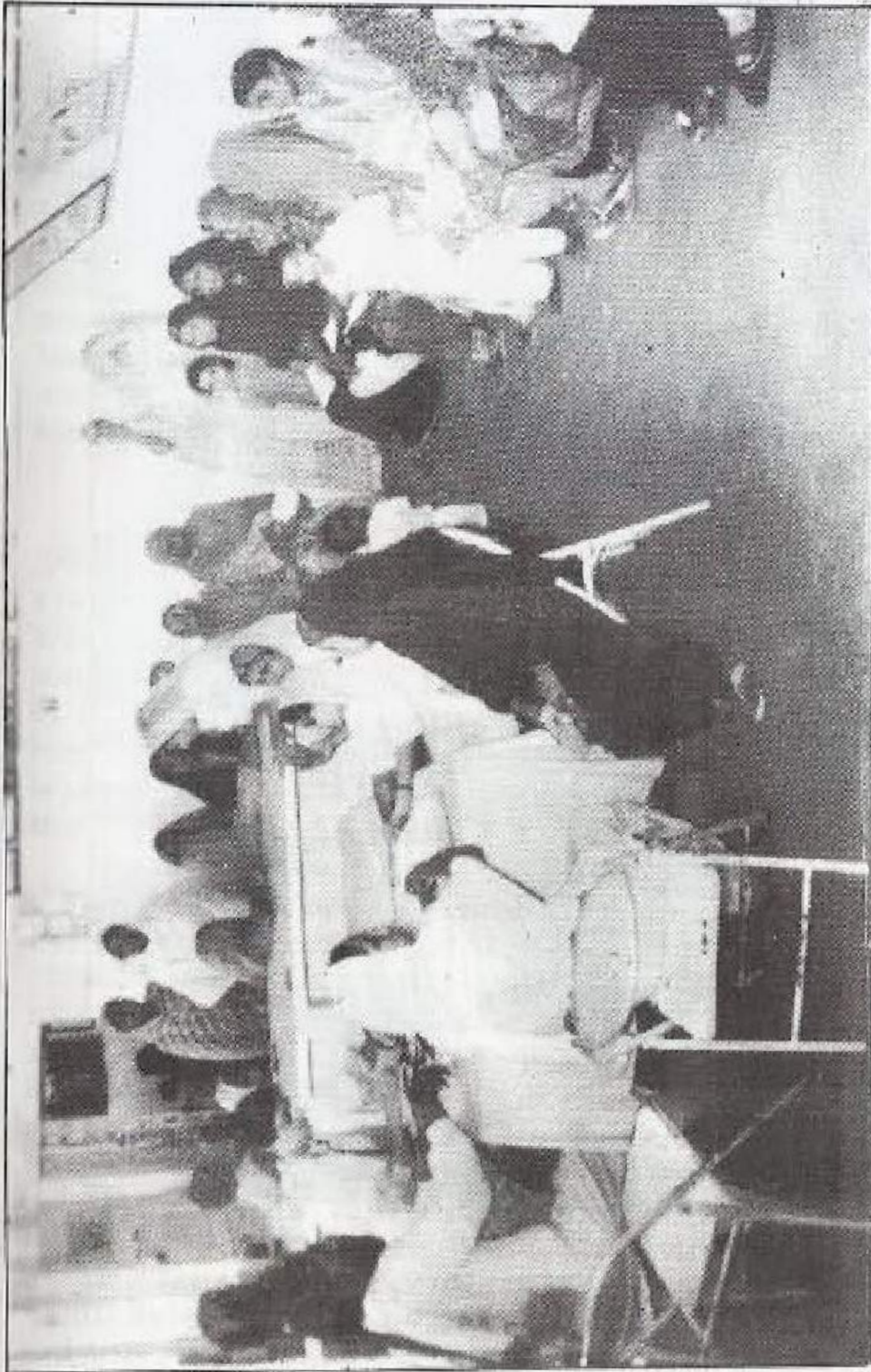
A teacher in Korangi Centre taking a class of children aged 5 to 12 years. 125 children line in this centre where they also receive education and training in various trades and skills.





Blood test being carried out in the laboratory  
of Mithadar dispensary.





A lady doctor checking up women in Mithadar Maternity Home. All maternity cases are handled free of any charge. Vaccination and injections for children are also free.





Maulana Edhi opened a small dispensary here in 1954. Today it is a 3-story building with an Emergency Centre and office on the ground floor and a dispensary and a maternity home on the upper floors. More than a hundred women receive medical attention here daily.



The book is based mostly on closely observed facts and these facts are such as to make one wonder if such a man really exists in our times and in our own country, Pakistan. Edhi comes of a Memon family and this community has to its credit a commendable record of social service. As mentioned earlier, at my age I cannot possibly cover in detail all the long years of his social service. It would not be an understatement to say that only ten percent of his services could be recorded in this small book. I would invite you to meet this man, observe him while he is engaged in his mission every day of the week not from dawn to dusk, but till very late in the night, examine his work with a critical eye and I am sure you will find in him a unique personality of our age.

People address him as Maulana, an honorific generally used for people well-versed in Islamic studies: Quran, Hadeeth, Fiqh etc. Abdus Sattar Edhi is not a Maulana in that sense. The only outward sign of a Maula in his person is his beard. It is actually his work, his mission that has earned him this respectable form of address. And none would deny that his mission is in full accord with the teachings of Islam.

He is not narrow-minded, makes no distinction between this man and that man on the basis of colour or creed. He is out to serve all suffering humanity. His ideological bent led to opposition from a vocal section of his community, but he ignored it and founded an institution under the name of Edhi Trust. Small though it was in the beginning, it is now a large organization well-known not only in Karachi but throughout Pakistan and beyond. Any calamity, natural or otherwise, be it an earthquake, a cyclone, an epidemic or a bomb blast by terrorists or any other man-made tragedy, Edhi arrives there (means permitting) with his men and materials for rescue and relief operations.



While in his company and observing him closely what has impressed me deeply is his strong Faith. An ascetic ('Faqir') by temperament or by choice, he begs of God alone. And Almighty Allah gives him what he wants. This may be because he begs not for himself but for the suffering humanity. He says he has "seen" God from close quarters. Where? With the crippled, the sick, the destitute, the decrepit and the mentally-deranged.

With his Trust's annual budget now running in tens of millions of rupees, he himself is still seen clad in grey-cloth 'kurta' and 'pyjama' (shirt and pyjamas) that he used to wear 38 years ago. He still rests or sleeps at night on a wooden bench of his dispensary, and still eats as his breakfast a left-over loaf of bread baked a day earlier. He neither chews betel-leaves nor smokes; does not like to view T.V. programmes or listen to radio broadcasts.

I once asked him, "Edhi Saheb, you say the five daily prayers regularly. May I know what you beg of Allah?" "It is only one wish: O Allah; grant me the ability to do some good deed." he replied softly.

His heart throbs with the desire to do as much good as possible for his country, for his people and for humanity at large. He wants to see no victim of an accident or disaster die without receiving first-aid. In an emergency, just ring any of the Edhi Centres in Karachi and an ambulance with necessary relief supplies will arrive at the given address within 10 minutes. He wants to make similar facilities available everywhere in this country and, later, in other developing countries. But his difficulty is the lack of availability of willing, honest workers. Even today, people cheat him, tell him lies, call him names on the telephone and even on his face. His reaction is only a wan smile. Those who doubt his integrity and sincerity,



or accuse him of this or that imaginary "sin" are only the ones who do not pause to take account of their own thoughts and actions. Today, in the largest and most populated city of Pakistan, people repose such confidence and trust in him that whoever wants to give Zakat or charity in money or material, thinks first of Edhi Trust. His person and his name have become a symbol of trust. To him all such moneys and goods are a trust of the people; he spends not a single paisa of the Trust on himself nor his family.

This great man shuns publicity. He has been the Editor of a Gujrati magazine but does not like giving interviews for self-publicity. His mission is all that matters to him. Of his projects, on-going and on the anvil, the largest aims at training of about 2,000 girls to make them useful citizens. A Centre for them is being constructed under the supervision of Bilqees Edhi Foundation. It will impart education to girls for Matriculation and Degree examinations, sewing, embroidery work and teaching. After training, the girls will be attached to centres to be established in different cities of the country. Each centre will be provided with ambulances and first-aid and relief goods. In Abdus Sattar Edhi's considered opinion, based, of course, on experience, women have a better and greater sense of duty, service and sacrifice than men. That is why he has given preference to women for education and training. He visualizes that in ten years' time, he will have raised a large women's corps, well-equipped for social service. After having established such centres in all the cities of Pakistan, at least the larger ones, he will try to set up similar centres in the larger cities and towns of other developing countries.

His wife, Bilqees Edhi, also thinks on similar lines. Her heart, too, is full of zeal for social service. She shares her husband's feelings for the suffering humanity and assists him in carrying out



his mission. She has become a very active social worker after the establishment of the Bilqees Edhi Foundation. There is no doubt that she has fully imbibed the spirit that moves and motivates her husband.

Keeping in view the personality, the character and the achievements of Abdus Sattar Edhi for the good of humanity, one rightly shares the general feeling that he deserves a NOBEL PRIZE.

K.H. AWAN

## MAULANA ABDUS SATTAR EDHI

### ---The Angel of Mercy!

Yes. They call him "The Angel of Mercy"! The name of Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi is a household word in Pakistan today. Even a child knows him. And now, his fame is crossing the barriers of countries and continents. Recipient of the Philippines' prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service, Maulana Edhi's work is already getting known and being acknowledged worldwide. It deserves to. In fact, it is already acquiring the proportions of a movement. A purely humanitarian movement---caste or creed being no bar. Be they the victims of the Saddar bomb blasts in Karachi, the earthquake victims in Chitral, the flood victims of Bangladesh, the drought-stricken Ethiopians, or, for that matter, injured soldiers in war-torn Beirut ---Arabs or Israelis---everyone would be equally served by Maulana Edhi. Because they are all humans! He firmly believes that social service is a human need.

Number three among four brothers and one sister, Abdus Sattar Edhi was born to Hur Bai on 28 December 1932 in the Dhobiwar quarters of Bantva in Kathiawar (India). His father, Abdush Shakor Edhi ran, in true Memon tradition, a business, though small.

The child Abdus Sattar was sent to an Islamic madressah for his primary education. However, he had little interest in education and it was with quite some difficulty that he passed four classes in that Gujrati-medium school.

Even as a child, what Abdus Sattar was really interested in was doing service to the women-folk and the aged men of the area. Even while he was playing and having fun with his playmates, if someone called out "Sttarya!" (a loving corruption



of his name), he would leave the game to go and perform whatever service was needed of him. Upon return, Sattar invariably had to face the taunts of his playmates: "You are a 'roti' (a loaf of bread) to be eaten by anyone who feels like it". But the real happiness that Sattar derived by helping the weak and the poor was a reward that would sustain him in such ordeals.

As a teenager, Sattar Edhi trained himself as a compounder in the village dispensary. In those days he used to talk to his friends about how he wished he could go to some big city like Ahmadabad or Bombay to earn some money with which he could help the poor, the needy and those in distress. His friends thought he had gone off his rocker. They lamented his lack of good sense and opined that he would never be able to make a mark in life for himself.

In 1947 came the Partition of the sub-continent. Like the majority of Muslims of Kathiawar, in 1949 the family of Abdus Sattar Edhi (then 17) also migrated to Pakistan. They settled in Karachi's Memon-dominated old-City area of Mithadar. While his father engaged in a small-time currency exchange business, he got hold of a salesman's job in a Cloth Market shop at a salary of Rs.60/- per month. A difference of opinion with his employer brought an end to that job. In his next job, with a medical store, he was offered a salary of Rs.125/- per month. He, however, told his employer that he would take only Rs.60/- as that amount would suffice his needs!

He continued to work at the medical store, but Abdus Sattar Edhi felt it was not the kind of work that could bring him inner satisfaction. To that end, he enlisted the support of some friends and opened an adult literacy centre. It was a one-room affair with only one teacher who taught adults in the evening. An organization, the Young Muslim



Association, which would hold 'Wa'z' (religious sermon) meetings during the month of Muharram, was their next venture. But none of these things could bring him the fulfilment he was seeking.

So, in order to pursue his mission of social service, he organized, in 1952, the Bantva Memon Seva Samiti, a small party of social workers. But he soon dissociated himself from it and with like-minded people cooperating, set up another one---the Bantva Memon Volunteer Corps. A strict disciplinarian, Abdus Sattar Edhi drew its charter himself and made it a cardinal principle of membership that its continuation would depend upon active and regular participation in the social work.

Maulana Edhi founded a free dispensary, in 1954, in the Boulton Market area where the Head Office of the Edhi Centres is located now. The Department of Rehabilitation had allotted a small plot of land for this dispensary. For the expansion of the dispensary, some more land was later bought for Rs.14,000/-.

Maulana Edhi's voluntary work for the dispensary hardly left him any time to do anything else. But, to meet the expenses of the dispensary on his own, he would serve as a bearer at marriage functions and use his wages to run the dispensary.

During the influenza epidemic of 1956 in Karachi, Maulana Edhi's dispensary supplied medicines and rendered other medical help free to the sufferers. Maulana Edhi even personally visited the homes of the sick to give them treatment. Selfless service of this kind endeared him to people and they made voluntary contributions, totalling Rs.36,000/- for his dispensary. This money helped him add one floor to the dispensary and open a Nursing Home and a Nursing Training Institute there. In the early days, it was only girls from the Memon families who would come forward, due to Maulana's persuasion, to receive training as nurses.



Maulana Edhi's first ambulance, which came in 1959, carried the queer but very apt name of "Ghareeb Van" (the poor man's van). It was bought for Rs.2,400/- out of a total fund amount of Rs.3,000/- which he had in his account at that time. Not knowing driving at that time, he had to employ a driver.

In due course, he himself learned driving. Being a dispenser already, he was then able to handle all the work himself in case of an emergency.

By now Maulana Edhi had come to have a clear-cut idea about his mission and the responsibilities it entailed. But this was the thing he wanted to do all his life. The very thing which gave him that deep inner satisfaction. A real sense of fulfilment. The thing that he was destined to do.

That realization made him all the more humble. His outlook about life was radically different from other people. His way of life, his habits, everything about him had already been moulded perfectly to fit that ultimate form of Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi ---a one-man humanitarian movement that would one day humble the greatest of world leaders before him!

Eating simple, ordinary meals, wearing simple dresses of coarse cloth, and ordinary chappals (men's sandals) on his feet, resting or sleeping on a wooden bench in his dispensary or on the footpath, personally administering the "ghusl" (the last bath of the dead prescribed in Islam) and performing other funeral rites of the unclaimed or destitute dead, were living proof of his selfless devotion to the cause of serving humanity. All this began to convince more and more people about his integrity, trustworthiness and sincerity of purpose. When he carried someone in his van to the hospital, or performed the funeral rites of an unclaimed deadbody (including the prescribed bath,



shrouding and burial) all by himself, and people wanted to pay him for his services, he would politely refuse, saying that whatever he was doing was in the way of Allah and only to please Him. His advice: if anyone wanted to cooperate in the good cause, they should come to his dispensary and obtain a proper receipt for their contribution.

As news of his work spread and, impressed by his missionary zeal, people began to repose greater confidence in him. They would call at his dispensary to deposit their contributions in cash or kind. And he would personally go to their houses on Eid-ul-Azha to collect the skins of sacrificed animals, the sale-proceeds of which would replenish the much needed funds to carry on his charitable work.

Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi's desire to serve people dragged him even into the thorny bush of politics. He wanted to serve people by working for their good and to save them from the exploitation of power-hungry politicians. In the 1964 Presidential Election, he supported Quaid-e-Azam's sister, Miss Fatima Jinnah against Ayub Khan. On the eve of elections, he was offered a big chunk of money as a donation for his dispensary if he would withdraw his support of Miss Jinnah and work for Ayub Khan. Needless to say that he refused. For obvious reasons, she lost. However, when later she appealed to the Basic Democracy Members to tender their resignations, Maulana Edhi was the first to respond to her call.

Another demonstration of principles reigning supreme with Maulana Edhi came when, during Yahya Khan's time he was contesting the elections for the Provincial Assembly. While polling was still going on, he was informed that a snake-charmer was lying dead on a footpath. He immediately left his election camp and made funeral arrangements for the deceased. In the mean time, ballot boxes



were filled with a large number of bogus votes. He was defeated, but he did not regret his actions.

His community once advised him to confine his social service to members of his community only. He refused, arguing that being the crowning glory of Allah's creation, man should not be narrow-minded or ungenerous.

Maulana Edhi sincerely wishes that his services should not remain confined to Karachi, or Sind, or even Pakistan. That they should extend to the whole world, particularly the Muslim countries where social service agencies are badly needed. Enthused with these ideals, he established the Madina Association and Madina Trust. But soon he thought better. There was the fear that people may be exploited by the fraudulent use of the names of his Association and his Trust because it is a well known fact that a large number of organizations and individuals in our country were practically picking the pockets of our masses by exploiting their religious feelings associated with the names of those two sacred cities. Also, there was the consideration that Madina being the city where the final resting place of our Holy Prophet Mohammad (Peace be upon him) is situated, it would be impossible to maintain the sanctity of its name after using it on letterheads and other stationery which are pieces of paper that are so often thrown around and trampled under people's feet. Therefore, he gave the Association and the Trust his own name which, alongwith his character was well-known to the people who wanted to contribute in money or material.

The prolonged illness of Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi's mother was the biggest single factor which prompted him to take up social service and humanitarian work. She eventually died of paralysis. For eight long years he attended to all the human needs of his ailing mother whom he loved very dearly. During that period he had some painful



experiences. He saw the condition of poor people in illness and pain who were cursorily and carelessly attended to by the doctors and given away cheap and ineffective medicines.

His mother perhaps had the premonition that her end was near. So, she would often ask her dear son "Sattar, when will you marry? Will it be after I am dead?" If only to please his mother, he sent marriage proposals to some girls but, knowing his bent of mind and his absolute dedication to his work, no one agreed to make him her life-partner. Meanwhile, his mother died without seeing the happy day she used to dream of.

In 1966, however, he spoke to the aunt of a girl named Bilqees, who was under training as a nurse in his dispensary, asking the hand of Bilqees in marriage. The aunt consulted her sister, Hajiani Rabia, the mother of Bilqees, before putting the proposal before Bilqees herself. She readily gave her consent.

Some time later, their Nikah was held in a mosque in his neighbourhood and the marriage was solemnized with only three or four men from either side attending the ceremony. The mehr amount was only Rs.125/-.

When Abdus Sattar Edhi, the bridegroom went to the parental home of the bride to bring her to his own home, women and children of the neighbourhood gathered on their rooftops to see the 'rukhsat-ee' (farewell) ceremony. But soon this happy occasion was marred by an accident. A little girl fell down from the third floor rooftop of her huse. Seeing this, the bridegroom immediately put off his 'sehra' and, holding the little girl in his arms, rushed to the hospital.

Men and women of the bridegroom's party as well as the bride's relatives who had gathered at



her house to bid her farewell, had to wait till late in the night when the bridegroom returned after doing the needful for the badly injured girl.

Even marriage did not bring about much of a change in Maulana Edhi's routine. Only after the birth of their second daughter, Almas, did a little change, though not easily discernible, come about in his rather harsh approach to work.

On 28 November 1974, Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi founded the Edhi Welfare Centre. Later, under this organization he opened an Edhi Home known as "Apna Ghar" in Sohrab Goth. This provides shelter to unclaimed children, disabled men and women, young run-away girls who have left their parental homes, and women oppressed by their husbands or in-laws and therefore forced to leave them or turned out by them. Several hundred such individuals have found peaceful shelter therer over the past few years.

Edhi Home soon started attracting public as well as official attention. When Ministers and high officials of the Government started visiting Apna Ghar, Maulana Edhi's achievements came into lime-light and got more public recognition which, naturally, provided him greater encouragement to carry on his work with greater zeal. And new centres began to appear in Karachi as well as other big cities of Pakistan.

The tragic collapse of Bismillah Building in Karachi was perhaps more intensely painful than the Pan-American plane hijack or the Saddam terrorist bomb blast tragedy. Maulana Edhi and his volunteers started rescue and relief work immediately after the collapse. He arranged electricity generators and cranes to get over the darkness of the night, remove the debris and find out the crushed dead bodies and look for survivors. Long hours of ceaseless relief work earned Maulana Edhi and



his volunteers public appreciation. They called them, "men of boundless courage and determination" and "angels of blessing and mercy".

The Edhis have been blessed with two sons and two daughters. Elder daughter Kubra has been married to a cousin, the son of Bilqees' sister. No minister or high official of the Government was invited at the very simple Islamic ceremony. She has now come back to Karachi and lives in Apna Ghar to look after the orphan girls sheltered there. Just to make those girls happy, she did not even go home on the last Eid-ul-Azha. She says she wants to spend all her time serving the orphans, the helpless and the needy.

Elder son Qutb is studying in the 9th class, is learning driving and accompanies his father and volunteers to places of accidents or other tragedies. Younger daughter Almas (younger to Qutb) has been engaged for marriage. The youngest child, Faisal, is as intelligent as his parents and spends much of his time playing with the children in Apna Ghar.

When, in appreciation of his public service, President of Pakistan General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq nominated Maulana Edhi as a Member of the Majlis-e-Shoora, he remained the same simple person as ever before. When called to Islamabad to attend a session of Majlis-e-Shoora, he would travel Second Class in a train, ride a public bus to a hotel where the room rent was not more than Rs.10/- or 15/- per day. From his hotel he would go to the Assembly Hall again on a bus. If offered a lift, he would refuse politely. And he is the only Member of the Majlis-e-Shoora who never drew any travelling or daily allowance from the official funds.

Snobbish behaviour, verging on downright insult, on the part of a high Government official---



who judged a man by his clothes and would not know a great man when he saw one---resulted in Maulana Edhi resigning his membership of the Majlis-e-Shoora. The Government immediately had to request the newspapers and other media to refrain from publishing the news. The whole thing having been quickly hushed up, the high official who had spoken to Maulana Edhi in the VIP Room of the airport was sent to Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi to express his "regrets". Because despite all his simplicity and humility, Maulana Edhi reigns the hearts of the masses of Pakistan---and that is being very powerful!!!

## MAULANA ABDUS SATTAR EDHI'S SERVICES

Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi---the living legend ---has the fundamental traits of a soldier, a doctor, and a fireman all at the same time. Like a soldier, he is carrying out his "jihad" (holy war) against the killer forces of hunger and addiction. The doctor in him wants to rid the suffering humanity of all manner of disease and pain. And his inner fireman keeps pushing him to brave all dangers in the way of putting out the raging infernos of hatred and insensibility sparked by petty communalism, regionalism, nationalism and, most often, the resultant terrorism. (While the greatest of all "isms"---humanitarianism---has been forgotten and forsaken by all. All except a few 'Edhis', that is.)

But his crowning glory is the one trait that is the common denominator of all these three selfless professionals. The soldier, the doctor and the fireman have to be on call all twenty-four hours of the day and night. Their time and life belong to those who stand in need of their services---a nation facing aggression, a patient fighting for life, or the inmates of a house on fire. They are duty-bound to respond instantly. So does Maulana Edhi.

Between his routines---working in his office, bathing and burying the unclaimed dead, visiting the Centres, issuing instructions to his army of volunteers and personally assisting them---and being present in the front-line of rescue and relief operations during emergencies---fires, drownings, collapses of buildings, bomb blasts, riots, you name it---he has no time left for himself. Consequently, he has no fixed hours of rest or sleep. And this has been going on 24-hours-a-day for the last about 38 years. In the service of the needy and the helpless.



The following may perhaps serve to provide my readers with some idea of the magnitude of Maulana Edhi's work.

\* Early in 1986, when this writer was preparing his first book on Maulana Edhi (in Urdu), the number of ambulances at different centres was 80. Today in the 3rd quarter of 1987) there are 175 such vans. The number of Edhi centres which was then 11, is now 24. The annual budget has also increased during this period from 35 million to 50 million rupees.

\* On an average, 500 people benefit daily from the free dispensaries.

\* In the maternity home, 21,000 cases have been attended to since 1958.

\* APNA GHAR in Sohrab Goth has so far provided shelter to 41,000 men and women.

\* Abandoned/unclaimed new-born babies cared for and later given to childless couples number 1300.

\* 20,000 unclaimed dead bodies have been given GHUSL (The prescribed bath) and proper burial.

\* About 2,000 persons are at present housed in APNA GHAR and other centres. Among them there are about 700 mental cases. Besides proper accommodation, all of them also get meals and medicines and medical investigation free of any charge. About 100 goats received as "SADAQAH" from different people are slaughtered daily to prepare meat dishes for the inmates.

\* Indigent patients under treatment in the T.B. Hospital, Civil Hospital and some other institutions are also supplied meals/meat, etc., by Edhi Centre.

\* During the floods of 1973, Maulana Edhi and his workers extended all possible help to those affected. He personally visited Moro and Daulatpur and set up relief camps there.

\* During the 1971 War, he immediately reached the places bombed by the enemy. Three ambulances would accompany him to carry the wounded to hospitals.

\* He carried out rescue and relief work during the 1965 War also.

\* When refugees from East Pakistan began to arrive in Karachi after 1971, he provided each family with mats and bamboo poles to build a shelter as well as with rice, pulses, utensils, clothes, quilts and sewing machines.

\* When Swat was hit by a severe earthquake in 1974, Abdus Sattar Edhi arrived in the affected area with his wife, stayed there 8 days and distributed Rs.16,000/- worth of medicines, besides some other relief goods like blankets, etc.

\* The Maulana visited Bangladesh during the recent flood havoc and provided one ambulance and Rs.1,00,000/- worth of relief goods.

\* During the worriome days following the hijacking of a Pan-American plane, he had no rest for 72 hours and remained busy attending to the sick and the wounded. He supplied them with medicines and blood for transfusion. he also distributed Rs.2,00,000/- in cash.

\* In the drought-stricken Thar region, rice, wheat and other articles of food are being regularly distributed among the affected people.

\* Among those who suffered in the recent (1987)



bomb blasts in Sadar area of Karachi, Rs.2,00,000/- were distributed. Medicines were also provided free to the injured.

\* For the drought-stricken people of Ethiopia, Rs.6,00,000/- worth of relief supplies were sent. He himself visited the country.

\* He also went to Beirut, which has been ravaged by internal war and external aggression, and distributed Rs.8,00,000/- worth of relief goods and arranged burial of the dead.

\* Seventy percent of all those who are wounded in internecine fighting or riots, or injured in accidents are attended to by Edhi's workers who also arrange burial of the dead.

\* Any hour of the day and night when he hears about an accident or an emergency situation, he at once arrives at the spot and provides all possible help.

\* His Trust looks after 2,000 patients in different centres and provides them with beds, clothes, meals and medical aid free of charge.

### FUTURE PLANS

Conscious of the tremendous need for social welfare work in Pakistan, Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi has in hand a number of projects and plans for the future. Some of the major ones are listed below:

1. Construction work is in progress for a Centre to accommodate two hundred crippled and male and female child mental patients at Korangi. Rs.20 Lacs are required for the same. (Thirty percent accommodation is reserved for orphans).

1. Construction work is in progress for a Centre to accommodate one hundred crippled and male and female child mental patients at Landhi. Rs. 20 Lacs are required for the same.
2. Rs.5 Lacs are required for construction of an Eye Hospital at Qasba Colony. (It shall be a fifty-bed hospital. Construction work is in progress).
4. A hospital for two thousand orphans girls, wherein they will be trained to serve as true Muslims with missionary zeal. They will each be paid a stipend of Rs. two thousand per month. During training they will be taught English, Arabic or French language. Apart from this, they will undergo medical course, maternity training, how to give bath to dead bodies, and motor driving, etc. As there are medical colleges for doctors, darool-ulums for ulema, in the same way this will be a centre for humanitarian services.

For the construction of these projects, a scheme of Rs. ten crores has been prepared. The construction work is in progress.

5. There is a plot of 65 acres on Super Highway. Out of this, on thirty acres there shall be a centre for mental patients both male and female. Besides, there will be:
  - A welfare centre and hospital for sick and crippled animals.
  - A hospital for addicts, over two acres.
  - Over one acre there will be a first-aid centre and a hospital for admission of people who are injured in the accidents. (Rs.5 crores are required for this).



- To establish and run an ambulance car centre over Super Highway and other highways of the country at every hundred miles. At present, five Centres are established at Peshawar, Lahore, Islamabad, Sukkur and Multan. At Hyderabad and on Super Highway, three Centres, comprising two ambulance cars at each Centre, are established. Rs.10 Lacs annully are required to run these Centres. In order to complete the Centre at Super Highway and to cover the expenses, stickers of two ruppes each are issued on "self-help basis". Public is requested to purchase the same voluntarily considering this as a service to humanity. Stickers are available from the Centres at Super Highway.

**RECOGNITION:** In recognition of their humanitarian, public service activities, Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi and his wife Bilqees Bano Edhi were awarded, in 1986, the Philippines' prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service.

The internationally famous Reader's Digest carried an article, in its issue of November 1987, on the Philippines' Ramon Magsaysay and the awards instituted in his memory. Under the heading 'The Ramon Magsaysay Awards: "Asia's Nobel Prizes"', it writes:

"Ramon Magsaysay worked to build a nation. Once a year, however, when the Magsaysay Awards are announced in Manila, his name helps develop a continent.

Open to men and women in Asia, regardless of race, creed or nationality, the awards are presented in recognition of lives and activities "exemplary of the ideals and spirit of service personified by Ramon Magsaysay." In its random list of typical awardees, it lists: "Pakistan's Abdus Sattar Edhi and Bilqees Bano Edhi



(1986), for "giving substance in an Islamic society to the ancient humane commandment that thou art thy brother's keeper."

In 1987, this honour was bestowed on the Edhis once again, indicating the tremendous impact and further recognition of their humanitarian services on an international level.

It is, however, surprising---and, perhaps, a reflection on the workings of Pakistan's bureaucracy---that the names of the Edhis have yet to appear in our own honours lists!

Nevertheless, being a man of the masses, it is only natural and befitting that the masses love him and he has been accorded public recognition in numerous forms. To name but a few public awards: The Pakistan Award for Human Rights (Dec.10,1983); the M.P.I. Award (1986); The Government of Sind's Shield, etc.

**HELICOPTER AMBULANCE, RESCUE AND RELIEF SERVICES:** One of Maulana Edhi's prime concerns being the availability of first-aid to victims of accidents and other natural or man-made calamities, he has requested the Government of Pakistan to grant him permission to start a helicopter ambulance service so that rescue, relief and first-aid facilities can be made available at the shortest possible notice to victims even at the remotest and otherwise inaccessible spots.

Pending the grant of that permission, he has already started negotiating with an American firm for the purchase of helicopters. With the permission being granted, it would be possible much more swiftly to rescue the victims of calamities or accidents, and, after the necessary first-aid, rush them to the nearest hospital. And the time thus saved may make all the difference between life and death.



Recently, after a five-day visit to the drought-stricken Tharparkar district of Sind, Maulana Edhi announced the setting up of an "Apna Ghar" (home for the destitute), at Mirwah, for migrants of the Thar region. A four-acre plot has been donated for the purpose by a local philanthropist.

From Mirpurkhas, Maulana Edhi carried a truck-load of relief supplies which he distributed among the drought-affected people of Thar. He also distributed blankets, grains and other relief supplies to students of a local hostel and goods worth about Rs.48,000 to other people in the area.

**FIVE PRINCIPLES OF SOCIAL SERVICE:** Years ago, when Maulana Edhi decided to become a social worker, he adopted the following principles for the rest of his life:

1). He will wear simple, coarse clothes so that even the poorest man coming to him may not feel inferior and those who would come to give some donation or charity money or material may feel confident that their money or goods would be used for the purpose they had in mind. He wanted them to have no doubt about his integrity, for without such trust no institution devoted to the service of humanity could continue to work for the cause it had embraced.

2). He will avoid all unnecessary expenditure on himself and his family. He will not have tea during his work nor offer a cup to any visitors. He will not smoke, nor chew pan (Betel leaf) nor use snuff. He will also not go to any cinema house or stage shows and deny himself other such entertainments.

3). He will live in a simple house with the barest minimum necessities of life.

4). Whenever he would decide to get married, he



will tell his life-partner all about himself, hiding nothing from her and thus elicit her confidence, trust and co-operation, so necessary for one dedicated to the service of humanity.

5). He will keep his heart free of any desire to get or accumulate wealth. To meet his personal and family needs, he will try to earn necessary but clean livelihood and will never use any money or goods received by his Trust for himself or his family.

With God's blessings and help, he has been successful in abiding by these principles during all these long years of his social work and one may confidently hope and pray that he will continue to observe them as strictly as ever during the rest of his life.

**VOLUNTARY PUBLIC CONTRIBUTIONS ONLY:** Maulana Edhi has, on principle, never accepted any contribution, donation or grant from any government department or agency. So much so that when President Zia-ul-Haq sent him a donation of Rs.5 lacs as aid to the Edhi Trust, Maulana Edhi politely returned the cheque, thanking the President of Pakistan for his noble sentiments but humbly putting forward the argument that while he did not want the Edhi Trust to be a burden on the national exchequer and thus help the Government, he also wanted to set an example that even the biggest of institutions devoted to humanitarian service could be run without government help.

Social welfare institutions usually send their workers to visit people to get their donations or contributions. One would try in vain to find an exception to this practice. Edhi Trust appears to be the lone example of a social welfare institution that has, since its establishment about 40 years back, never sent any of its workers to knock at



people's doors for donations or charity contributions. On the contrary, people themselves come to Edhi centres with contributions in cash or kind for charitable purposes. Especially during the holy month of Ramazan, one can see people standing in queues outside these centres waiting for their turn to give money or material to the Trust.

**CHARITY TOKENS - NO LOTTERY:** Institutions with no regular or permanent source of income have to use different methods to collect funds. One source of funds to run various centres under Edhi Trust consists of Zakat money and SADAQAT. Back in 1958, Maulana Edhi issued one-rupee tokens to collect funds for the establishment of a maternity home. In 1986 also, he issued two-rupee tokens for the purpose of collecting funds to meet expenditure on providing medical or surgical aid and other relief measures for victims of the increasing number of traffic accidents on the Super Highway. These token issues proved to be a successful experiment.

Now in 1987, 5-Rupee tokens have been issued to meet expenditure on the treatment of the sick and the wounded and on relief measures in case of accidents or natural calamities. These tokens will be available to the public-spirited people both in Pakistan and abroad. To attract people's attention a poster has also been issued. It says:

"To provide food and medicines to the helpless and needy, 5-Rupees tokens are being issued. This is no lottery. Its reward will be given by Almighty Allah both in this world as well as in the Hereafter."

"Can we not afford to forego just one simple meal to save the money to buy a token? Does our religion not permit us to do so for the sake of helping our fellow human beings."



### **TAKE BACK YOUR MONEY IN CASE OF DOUBT:**

The forms and receipts used by Edhi Trust centres have these words printed on them:

"In case you have any doubt about the proper use of your donation, you can get it back on showing the receipt."

Maulana Edhi's experience is that those who donate to the Trust have no doubts in their minds. They have full confidence in him and his humanitarian work. Critics and sceptics are only those who have never given. So far, none who has given to the Trust has asked for returning his money because of doubt about his integrity.

### **PEOPLE GIVE DONATIONS: THEY CAN ASK FOR**

**ACCOUNTS:** Edhi has not so far got his institution registered with the Government. He thinks that since he does not seek any help from the Government in this connection, it is not necessary to do so. Moreover, he wants to avoid interference in his work from official quarters, particularly the so-called petty officials, which is usual in the case of institutions registered with the Government. He is of the view that the contributions he receives are from the people and so it is they to whom he is accountable. He will be glad to render them all accounts whenever they want him to do so. He also keeps a mental account of all contributions received.

### **BUDGET RISES FROM RUPEES FIFTY THOUSAND TO FIFTY MILLION IN 13 YEARS:**

One would hardly find any institution devoted to social welfare that has made such progress in 13 years as has been made by the Edhi Trust. During this span of time, its budget has increased from Rs.5,000/- to Rs.5,00,00,000/- a year. This institution is being run on charitable public contributions and donations only. It seeks or receives no help from the Govern-



ment. Such a distinction is enjoyed by Maulana Edhi only.

**"PETTY THIEF", BIG THIEF"! For character assassination, a few words come handy to the Pakistani community. You may label anyone you dislike or hate as a thief, a fraud, a fornicator or adulterer. His own community first called Maulana Edhi a petty thief; now they say he is a big thief.**

**NO THIEF:** Edhi Trust was some time ago bitterly criticised by the Editor of a journal. When I spoke to him about it, he said without any sign of acrimony on his countenance or in his words that such critics have been found in every age. They did not spare even the prophets and accused them of baseless charges, he added. He further said, "I am an ordinary human being. I am doing what Allah wants me to do. I am no thief. I have done no harm to anyone. So I fear no one except Almighty Allah. My life, my character, and my services are like an open book."

**RIGHT TO STEAL!:** He says in a light vein that people would perhaps be prepared to give him even the right to steal money. He can, however, declare on oath that so far he has neither taken a single penny for his personal use from out of the funds received as donations, etc., from the people, nor indulged in any other fraudulent practice in keeping accounts. He says in the early days of Islam, our Khulafa-e-Raashideen (the rightly-guided Caliphs) were allowed to draw from the Baitul-Mal a minimum amount of money or materials necessary for the sustenance of their families. Probably he could follow their example; but he has never felt the need to do so.

**THEY DONATE BUT WANT NO RECEIPT:** Abdus Sattar Edhi says donations received by him are sometimes very large. Even as much as half-a-million



rupees have been donated at a time by a few persons. However, most of the people who give big donations express the wish that their names may not be disclosed. They even want no receipts for what they give.

**BIG CONTRIBUTION WITHOUT ASKING FOR RECEIPT:** I was sitting with Maulana Edhi in his Mithadar Centre when a man with a brief case came to see him. After exchange of greetings, he opened the brief case and taking out several bundles of currency notes put them before the Maulana as his contribution for the Trust. He then prepared to depart. Maulana Edhi asked him to have the receipt for the amount, but he politely refused saying that he did not need it.

**NO FIXED FEE NOW:** To enable the needy to get medicines from the dispensary, a small fee was charged in the earlier days and a slip issued against it. Patients used to produce the slip at the counter and the medicines they needed were handed over to them. Now that system has been abolished. Patients now put into a box through a slit whatever they like to pay or contribute towards the expenses of the dispensary. The present system has produced good results, and the amount people now contribute of their free will is more than what they used to pay as fee the slip system.

**X-RAY CHARGES RS.10/- ONLY:** X-Ray charges for outsiders coming to Edhi centres amount to Rs.10/- only. An oxygen cylinder is supplied for Rs.25/- or Rs.30/-. Patients admitted to Edhi Centre and treated there are not charged for these services.

**IN-PATIENTS GIVEN TRAINING IN VARIOUS TRADES AFTER RECOVERY:** In-patients of Edhi Home are not only given medical treatment free of



charge, they are also given training, after recovery from illness, in various trades according to their background and education. These trades include the work of plumber, electrician, painter, mechanic, office clerk, dresser, dispenser, ward boy and gardener. Their own choice and preference for a particular training is also kept in view.

**RELIEF GOODS AVAILABLE AT ANY TIME:** Edhi's workers keep food supplies, utensils, quilts, blankets and other relief articles in readiness to meet any emergency immediately.

**RANGE OF DONATIONS:** Maulana Edhi in reply to a question said that donations received by the Trust range from one rupee and twentyfive paisas to half a million rupees. A donor who gives Re.1.25 (one rupee and twenty five paisas) comes regularly every year and donates the amount against a proper receipt. The maximum amount of money donated by any man at a time was Rs.5,00,000/-. The first receipt issued by the Trust was for Rs.125/- given by his late mother Hur Bai.

**EDHI TRUST AND ITS TRUSTEES:** Besides his usual social service and welfare activities and rounds of various centres which keep him busy for most part of the day, Maulana Edhi is also thinking about the future of the institutions he has founded. According to the plan he has at present in his mind, there will be two main divisions under which they will work. The Foundation will take care of all the properties and donations while all social service and welfare activities and ambulances will be the responsibility of Edhi Centres. In other words, the Foundation will provide funds and other facilities to the Centre. To run the Trust, there will be seven Trustees whose essential qualification for shouldering that responsibility will be honesty, integrity and zeal for social work. He does not want to make the Foundation a personal property



to be inherited by his family members. He is giving a good deal of careful thought to the future set up. The proposed Foundation would be established on these lines after his death.

**BILQEES EDHI FOUNDATION:** Bilqees Edhi Foundation, too, has not been established with any idea of making it a personal, inheritable property. People are willingly giving donations for this Foundation also. It is because of the trust they repose in it. People are not much concerned about the name of an institution; they only want to know who the persons behind it are, and if they have confidence in those persons and trust in their honesty of purpose and integrity of character, they do not hesitate in extending their co-operation. He says if any of his sons and daughters establishes a foundation tomorrow and people donate to it, they will do so only on the basis of the qualities just mentioned. The fact, however, is that people trust his family members almost as much as they trust him.

#### **EDHI---Beware of Pitfalls!**

Nevertheless, one fact should not be lost sight of---that such organizations are often infiltrated by heartless people who are social parasites who just want to live off others. Maulana Edhi should, and does, take immediate and stern action on complaints of this nature so that this biggest Pakistani organization devoted to selfless public service should remain clean from such opportunists and "courtiers".



**THE PHILIPPINES AWARD:** On a query from this writer, Maulana Edhi said the amount of 20,000 Dollar received by him with Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service is not considered by him his personal property. The profits accruing from it are being given away by him to the Trust. After his death the amount of the Award will also go to the (planned) Foundation.

RAMON MAGSAYSAY AWARD FOUNDATION		1128
September 3, 1986		1986
ORDER OF	MR. ABDUL SATTAR EDHI & MRS. BILQUIS EDHI	\$ 10,000.00
*****TEN THOUSAND ONLY*****		DOLLARS
The Chase National Bank Inc. 460 First Avenue New York, N.Y. 10018		
FOR	JESUS M. ROGERS TRUSTEE	PERLA Q. MAXIL EXECUTIVE TRUSTEE
1001138 10210000241 949 1 308500		

*Abdul Sattar Edhi and  
Bilquis Bano Edhi  
1986 Ramon Magsaysay Award  
for  
Public Service*

*in recognition of giving substance in an Islamic society to the ancient  
humane commandment that thou art thy brother's keeper.*



*Manila on 31 August 1986*

*Victor R. Jr.  
Perla Q. Maxil*



## EDHI---The man, The Philosophy, The Perpetual Work

Edhi can hardly be described as a mere man ---he is a phenomenon; Edhi is also a philosophy; and the word Edhi has also by now come to mean perpetual, selfless work!

Abdus Sattar Edhi is one of the rare personalities of our day. He is neither a big businessman nor a well-known industrialist. He is not one who has earned a name in the field of education or Science. He is not even a graduate. How is it then that he is respected not only in Pakistan but all over the globe? Why do people pay homage to the greatness of a man who possesses at a time not more than two pairs of ordinary coarse clothing, a pair of old chappals (sandals) and a soiled cap? Why do they so readily respond to an appeal from him for funds or food or clothes to meet an emergency? Why do they willingly give millions in donations for his Trust? Those who know him and his work, directly or indirectly, can easily answer these questions.

Even today when his name and fame have crossed the borders of our country and reached far beyond, Abdus Sattar Edhi, lives with his family in a 18' X 22' room of a century-old building. Attached to that room is a small kitchen and a bath-room. he has no refrigerator, no Television set. Drinking water for the family is stored and cooled in a clay pitcher.

Spending most of his time in social service, Abdus Sattar Edhi has had to make some effort to earn an honest livelihood for himself and his family. With the income from small jobs that he took up in his earlier days in Pakistan, he lived frugally and made some savings. When enough money was thus



saved he purchased a shop. Later he sold the shop and purchased a house in Federal B Area. Then the house was sold and with the price received, he bought a shop in Kaghazi Bazar. After some time he bought two shops and let them on rent.

With the profits accruing from these purchases and sales and the small assets received as inheritance from his father, he bought Defence Saving Certificates. These yield an income of five to six thousand rupees. From his Bank account, an amount of Rs. 3,500/- was deducted as Zakat this year. His household expenditure is about Rs.2,000/- per month.

His wife, Bilqees Edhi says he has suffered from no serious illness during the past 21 years. She recalls only one occasion when he ran temperature. In an accident, however, he received severe injuries. It occurred near Rahimyar Khan while he was carrying in an ambulance a dead body to a place in Punjab. He was admitted to a nearby hospital, where the doctors immediately attended on him. The injuries were so severe that they wondered how he survived them. In the meantime rumour went around in Karachi that Maulana Edhi had died in a accident. People were grieved and the markets were closed in mourning. As he came to know about the accident, the then Chief Minister of Sind, Mr. Jatoi, arranged for a helicopter to bring the gravely injured Maulana Edhi from Rahimyar Khan to Karachi. He had to be treated and lie in bed for about a year.

Another worker and associate of the Edhis told this writer that on the completion of APNA GHAR in Sohrab Goth, he suggested that the Provincial Governor may be invited for the opening ceremony. Maulana Edhi did not say a word in acceptance or rejection of the suggestion. The next day APNA GHAR was declared open by a mentally



disabled child.

When six rooms of the Korangi centre were ready for occupation, he told his workers that the disabled children had to be moved to the new centre immediately. That centre too was opened by one such child.

The following material, I sincerely hope, would serve to give my readers an insight into Edhi---the man, the philosophy and the perpetual work.

**I AM A SINFUL MAN, NOT AN ANGEL:** In August, 1987 the Urdu daily, Jang, published reports of interviews with Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi and his wife Bilqees Edhi. The interviewer described him as an angel of Mercy. The name of the book that is now in your hands was also originally proposed by me about a year ago to be ANGEL OF MERCY. However, when I mentioned it to him, Maulana Edhi turned down the idea saying, "No man can be described as an angel because angels are pure and clean beings who just carry out God's commands without any wish or desire of their own. But man is a bundle of desires and in his efforts to fulfil these desires he often resorts to unfair, unjust and foul means. Even when he does a good deed, he is not free from the desire of some return or reward in this world or in the Hereafter like the desire to earn a place in Paradise. As far as I am concerned, I am a sinful man and do not consider myself to be worthy of entering Paradise. Only God knows which deed of mine, if any, is worthy of a reward in the Hereafter. I cannot, therefore, like to be described as an angel of Mercy or with any other epithet like this."

**I AM A NATIONALIST:** Abdus Sattar Edhi calls himself a Nationalist and feels happy and proud about it. Why a Nationalist? Because, as he says and as one can observe, he wears clothes made



with Pakistani material. Other articles of daily use found in his house are also made in Pakistan. Neither he himself nor any other member of his family has ever had the craze for foreign goods. Their simple needs are very well met by things produced in their own country. His own bank account as well as the accounts of the Trust are all maintained in Pakistani banks.

#### **BREAKFAST WITH LEFT-OVER LOAF OF BREAD:**

The Annual Budget of Edhi Trust has now touched the 8-figure mark. It is about fifty Million rupees. But the man managing an organization of this dimension still lives the same simple life that he has always lived. The left-over loaf of bread baked in his kitchen a day earlier is still relished by him at his breakfast. During the day he eats almost nothing. When he does feel hungry, he buys one-rupee worth of grams roasted in hot sand and satisfies his hunger.

**DREAMS, WISHES:** Abdus Sattar Edhi had never thought that the Edhi Trust would one day attain the dimensions it has, and would enjoy such reputation and confidence of the people. But Almighty Allah chooses a man for the job He wants to be done, supervises his work and takes him to the peak of success. In the Memon community, there are several people with money and means who possess a sympathetic heart and a philanthropic bent of mind; but He chose this man of little material resources and living a simple, rather ascetic life, to carry out the work that He entrusted him with for the benefit of mankind.

Maulana Edhi presently wishes to train some two thousand girls for social service and set up centres not only in every part of this country but also in backward and poverty-stricken areas of the world where they would render social service. He thinks that if God in His Mercy grants him a



few more years to live in this world he would be able, with His help, to see this desire, too, fulfilled.

He told me that in his childhood he had never thought or dreamed that some day he would be running such a big Trust. "Whatever people now see in a solid form associated with my name is all a blessing of God. He wanted me to work for a cause and therefore provided the necessary means for it and enabled me to shoulder this huge responsibility," he added.

**THEY WORKED TO PERFORM HAJ:** Begum Bilqees Edhi narrated to me the story of how she and her husband performed Haj. She said like most Muslims, performing Haj was a long-cherished desire with them too. But the means at their disposal were not enough. Almighty Allah, however, miraculously removed the monetary difficulties that had been standing in their way. It so happened that the Government allowed Haj travel by bus. A transport Company wanted a driver and a nurse to accompany the Haj pilgrims that it proposed to carry to the Holy cities of Saudi Arabia. The husband and wife both offered their services which were accepted. Maulana Edhi drove the bus while she attended to the sick and so they performed Haj without having to spend a penny on travel.

**HE DOES NOT VIEW T.V. NOR SEES REPORTS OF HIS INTERVIEWS:** Abdus Sattar Edhi has never been a cinema-goer; he does not like to see films. Once in Bantva, he had an occasion to see the film PUKAR, which showed how a Mughal King offered his own life to be taken in dispensation of justice to one of his subjects. On another occasion while he was staying in a hotel in Dhaka, he viewed a T.V. film because he had nothing else to do at that time.



He has given interviews to Radio and T.V. men, but has never seen them on T.V. or listened to them on the radio.

In 1986 my first book on Abdus Sattar Edhi was published in Urdu. When I presented a copy to him, he just cast a cursory glance on the title page and put it aside. On my request to go through the book and see what it contained, he replied softly that if he could find time, he would.

#### **OPPOSITION TO WOMEN'S TRAINING AS NURSES:**

Edhi belongs to the Memon community. He was the first member of the community who started nursing training for women. They said in those days that he was corrupting women-folk and exploiting them to satisfy his own desires. Slowly the opposition died down. Today, they willingly send women to work under the Trust.

**HALO OF HOLINESS:** During a conversation, Maulana Edhi told me what some people think about him. They asked him why there was no sign of holiness on his face as a result of the good work he had been doing for such a long time. He said "I want to tell such people that glows and shines are found on the faces of many who take bribes or make money through other illegal or immoral means. Drunkards, too, have glowing faces, and so have those who lend money on exorbitant rates of interest. It is the heart, not the face that should have the glow of holiness."

**GIVES HIS OWN PLOTS:** Maulana Edhi had purchased two plots of land out of his own small savings. One of these plots measuring 240 sq yds. was in Nazimabad. When these plots were purchased their prices were not high. They could, however, fetch a very high price if sold now. Maulana Edhi desired to use these plots for charitable purposes. He con-



sulted his wife, Bilqees Edhi, and they decided to make them Trust property.

"HELLO,..... this is Abdus Sattar Edhi": When someone calls him on the telephone, Maulana Edhi picking up the receiver says, "HELLO, As-Salam-o-Alaikum, this is Abdus Sattar speaking. How are you?"

**NO DESIRE TO MEET INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE:** Edhi never harboured in his heart the desire to establish personal contacts with people of high position or the wealthy. He has never requested for a meeting with the President of Pakistan or the Provincial Governor or Chief Minister. Among the wealthy class is Seth Ahmad Daood who belongs to Bantva which is also Maulana Edhi's native town. But he has never called even on Seth Daood.

**CHECKING VAN:** There is another van with nothing written on it to point out any specific purpose. It is used for checking up places where some accident has taken place or any criminal act is feared to have been committed. Its main purpose is investigatory. It is also used for carrying run-away girls to their homes.

**EMPTY VEHICLES? NO:** When he uses a vehicle, Maulana Edhi puts in it some articles that may be needed to meet an emergency. There may be some things that are to be delivered to a centre or some patient may have to be carried for medical treatment. Once, when I was in his company, while he was driving on the Super Highway, I found the vehicle full of medicines, buckets and other relief articles. He thinks, on reaching a centre there may be found an emergency situation to meet which any of these things might be needed. He does not let his vehicles run on the roads without some relief articles.



One of his habits is that the route he drives on to visit a centre is changed on the return journey. This is probably done with the idea that there might be a situation where his services would be needed.

**EDHI AMBULANCE WITH GENERATOR:** How he visualizes different emergencies is exemplified by the ambulance which he has fitted with a generator and a number of light bulbs on top. It is used when an accident takes place in a dark area, or when someone is drowned in a well or when a dead body is to be searched for in a jungle or on the seashore. Similar ambulances are being sent to Hyderabad and Lahore.

**NO PERSONAL USE OF VEHICLES:** Edhi Trust centres have several vehicles at their disposal to be used when needed for social service. Maulana Edhi's residence is at quite a distance from the Mithadar Centre but he does not use any vehicle to go home for meals or to go to the Centre. Begum Bilqees Edhi comes to the centre at 11 O'clock daily but she walks the distance both ways.

**ORDERS ELICIT IMMEDIATE ACTION:** All the centres run under the Trust work in an orderly manner. Any instructions given by Maulana Edhi are immediately carried out. Discipline in the centres is exemplary. It is like military discipline - may be even better.

**NEWSPAPER REPORT AND INSTANT ACTION BY BILQEES:** We were sitting in the Mithadar centre scanning the newspaper. Bilqees was also there. A report caught our attention. It was about the storm during the previous night in which about 20 straw huts below the Clifton Bridge were blown away leaving their poor inhabitants in distress. Maulana Edhi immediately asked Bilqees to go to the aid of the affected people with clothes and



food. If more relief supplies were needed, she should come back and deliver them to those poor people; he added. The desired action was quickly taken, without waiting for any official appeal for relief work, or for newspaper reporters and photographers to arrive at the spot to get publicity.

**NOTHING BUT TWO GLASSES OF WATER:** I was with Maulana Edhi one morning. At 10 O'clock he set out for his round of visits. I accompanied him. He went to the Trust centres on the Super Highway, in Buffer Zone, and in Korangi. At 8 O'clock in the evening, he dropped me near my home. During that whole day he had no lunch, not even a cup of tea at any place. All his refreshment or nourishment (if one could call it so) consisted of two glasses of water - not from a refrigerator but from a pitcher made of clay. That day my physical stamina ran out.

**TRAVELS ALONE:** I have accompanied Maulana Edhi from Sohrab Goth to Mithadar and to the Super Highway on his visits to various centres run under the Trust. This was, however, an exception for he usually travels alone. In view of the road accidents that occur daily in Karachi, I could not restrain myself from advising him not to drive alone, for if, God forbid, something untoward happened to him the humanitarian work he was doing would be difficult to carry on smoothly. In reply he only said with a smile, "Allah helps me. Don't worry. Nothing wil happen to me."

**VAN DRIVERS PAID FOR HONEST WORK:** Edhi Centre has a fleet of 175 ambulances and about 300 drivers are on its rolls. In the sub-centres only they are paid regular salaries. But the drivers attached to Sohrab Goth centre are not employed on a monthly salary; they are paid on the basis of trips made. Since their earnings depend on the



number of trips, they try to report back to the centre as early as possible after finishing a job assigned to them so that they would be readily available for the next assignment without losing time. Since it is common knowledge that most drivers try to make extra money through dishonest practices like stealing petrol, the Centre buys petrol directly to put a check to the possibility of that malpractice. In Karachi a fee of Rs.30/- is charged by the centres to carry a patient or victim of an accident to hospital or back home within the Municipal limits. A regular printed receipt is issued against this very reasonable charge. Malpractices on the part of drivers are thus curbed and they are made to work hard and earn an honest living.

#### **GIVE A BEGGAR AND WEAKEN HIS CHARACTER:**

Maulana Edhi tells us that his father was against giving anything to (professional) beggars. He was of the view that by our so-called help to the beggars, we weaken their character and silence the voice of their conscience. We should instead try to strengthen their self-confidence by putting them on to some job to enable them to earn their livelihood. To him also his father's advice was: "Depend on yourself, your own efforts and only on God's help to earn what you want to. Raise your hands in prayer before Almighty Allah who provides sustenance to all his creatures. Do not ask even your own brother for a loan to meet some need. This will save you from unnecessary gratefulness and worry about repaying the loan."

**"MYSELF A BEGGAR":** More than a hundred persons, both men and women, come to Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi daily with requests for monetary help to meet a pressing need of theirs, like the marriage of a daughter, payment of an instalment of loan taken for house building, etc. Of them, some are just professional beggars. He usually advises them to take up some work to earn money. Requests



for money to arrange a dowry to be given to a daughter at her marriage are not summarily turned down. With his advice for simplicity, he extends whatever help is possible to deserving cases. Requests for monetary assistance in paying off a house-building loan instalment are, however, not entertained. He says he himself is a beggar who begs not for himself or his family but for others, including about 2,000 sick or disabled persons who are provided with shelter, meals, clothing and medicines etc. by his Centres.

**A 'FAQIR':** Maulana Edhi says he is mentally and by temperament a 'Faqir' who wants to live a simple life with the barest minimum necessities of life. His wife, Bilqees Edhi, has the same approach towards life. He says whenever some new idea or plan strikes them while they are resting at night, they begin to consult each other and try to give it a concrete shape as early as possible. They hardly think about other things besides providing more and more services for the needy human beings through new centres and Poor Houses under the Trust.

**DOES NOT SEEK FAME:** Maulana Edhi has never run after fame. He wants no recognition for his own person. His only desire is that his organization, his institution be known to the people so that they too may be attracted to the kind of work he has been carrying on. Invitations are often extended to him to attend a function as Chief Guest, But he politely refuses. Had he desired his own publicity, he would not have turned down such invitations.

**NOBEL PRIZE:** People who meet him often tell him that he deserves a Nobel Prize for his humanitarian services but he replies that the work God has assigned to him is its own reward and better than a Nobel Prize.



**HE HAS "SEEN" GOD FROM CLOSE QUARTERS:** Maulana Edhi says he has 'seen' God from close quarters and he found Him among people who are helpless, sick, down-trodden and hated; who are breathing in lonely slums mindless of whether anybody cares for them or not. People who happen to pass by them, turn their faces from them in hatred and disgust. But God looks after them; He is so close to them.

**LOVED BY THE MENTALLY DERANGED:** When Maulana Edhi visits the centres for the mentally deranged persons, they rush towards him, not to assault him as one might think, but to shake hands with him. Some of them embrace him warmly and show their affection for him in other ways. He too feels for them deeply, holds them in affection, inquires about their welfare and gets their complaints immediately redressed. Some hug him for quite a few minutes but he does not try to get out of their hold.

**ABANDONED OR RUN-AWAY GIRLS REFUSE TO LEAVE "APNA GHAR":** There are several girls in APNA GHAR who were brought there five or six years ago. Their next of kin did come to take them back to their homes. But the girls refused to go with them saying that they were happier in APNA GHAR and were well looked after. They told the visitors that in this HOME established by Maulana Edhi, they were taught to read and write, were given regular wholesome meals, were trained in some handicraft of their liking and were allowed to view T.V. programmes. They had peace of mind where they were living, they said.

**THOUGH NOT HIGHLY EDUCATED HE LOOKS LIKE AN EXPERT:** Maulana Edhi has not had much formal education. Gujrati being his mother tongue, he can read it well. In Urdu and English he is not fluent. Although he has no degree or diploma in



commerce or accountancy account-keeping in his offices is well-handled and well-supervised. All contributions are duly recorded and receipts issued. Usually, receipts are in triplicate. One is kept for office record, and two of them are given to the person making the contribution, or his agent. One of these two has these words printed on it; "PLEASE SEND BACK THIS RECEIPT TO US TO ENABLE US TO CHECK OUR ACCOUNTS." Thus any discrepancies or wilful manipulations are duly checked.

To check on the performance of vehicle drivers, a printed form is required to be filled in within 12 hours after duty. Distance covered by the vehicle, petrol used and other details are mentioned on this form.

About innocent children, orphans and run-away girls found or reported to the Edhi centres, there are printed forms which give one detailed information about them without the need for seeking others' assistance in this connection.

I was informed that all accounts are regularly audited every year.

**A DISASTER OR AN EMERGENCY---HE IS THERE:**  
The sphere of Maulana Edhi's social service is not limited to Karachi or nearby places, nor even to Pakistan; it extends far beyond as the situation demands. When Chitral was hit by a severe earthquake, he visited the area and supervised the relief work that was being done by his Trust workers. He also assisted them personally. Relief for the victims of floods in Bangladesh was arranged by him immediately after he had read about the calamity in the newspapers. He reached there personally and helped those affected by the disastrous floods.

The drought-stricken Ethiopia also drew his



attention. When he applied for permission to visit that country to provide relief to its people, he could obtain a visa valid for only 10 days. He however went there and helped the starving people.

A few years ago, he even visited Beirut, the city that was once so beautiful but has been ravaged by internal strife and external aggression. The Israelis took him for a spy and arrested him. During the investigation that followed, an Israeli doctor came to examine him to find out whether or not he was a mental case. At that moment, he had in his hands a magazine that contained an interview with him. He showed it to the doctor and explained that he was only a social worker. The Doctor read the interview and was satisfied about his identity. He then accompanied him to the border and saw him off. He stayed in Beirut for nine days.

Abdus Sattar Edhi has not read any book on social service; knows no theories about it. He only realizes and believes that it is a human need and acts accordingly. He is a man of action.

### **EDHI FOUNDATION---A MISSIONARY INSTITUTION**

Edhi Foundation has established its name as a missionary institution. People trust it and contribute millions of rupees to it in the right hope of getting a continuous reward from God (Sawab-e-Jaariyah). Some may do so only to earn a good name in society. God is the best Judge of their intentions. Whatever the case, Maulana Edhi has become a mission by himself and God has made him an example to be emulated.

**TRIALS AND TRIBULATION:** During his past 40 years of social service, Maulana Edhi has seen quite a few periods of trials and tribulations. During the Bhutto regime, a union of workers was formed which worked against him and, as a result of its



activities, he was deprived of the authority to run the institution he had established after facing and solving a lot of difficulties that come in the way of persons dedicated to a humanitarian cause. God helped him through all such periods. He says opposition of workers like him is an unavoidable phenomenon and Allah will help him in future also as He has in his Mercy done in the past.

**HE HAS SHOWN THE WAY:** Maulana Edhi has established a method of work for social and humanitarian service and thus shown the way to others who want to enter this field. When he started his ambulance service, there was no other private organization rendering such service. Today there are scores of such organizations. He feels happy over the present number of ambulances in the country. He wishes that more and more people may come forward to join the field of social work, even if their intentions be not very sincere.

**REAL HAPPINESS:** Abdus Sattar Edhi says, his heart feels real and true happiness when he renders some service to fellow human beings and when he succeeds in getting some plan to serve humanity implemented. This year he met with extraordinary success in collecting skins of Qurbani animals, the sale of which brings funds for his centres to be run smoothly. This year the income from this source amounted to 70 Lakh Rupees. He says he has no personal desire the fulfilment of which may bring him happiness.

**THEY GIVE ANIMAL SKINS FOR SELF-INTEREST:** The Trust set up centres this year to collect skins of animals sacrificed on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha. People extended their co-operation but many of them later on came to Maulana Edhi to seek his recommendation and support for their various applications to Governmental agencies. Such examples of self-interest are deprecable and paint an unhappy



picture of our people. He has therefore decided not to set up any such centre for collection of skins next year. Those wishing to give animal skins would be asked to deliver them to one of the Edhi Trust centres already established.

Income from the sale of these skins is spent on funeral needs of the unclaimed dead bodies and on medical treatment of the poor and the needy.

**THEY SWEAR BY GOD BUT ARE CHEATS:** Maulana Edhi laments the decline of sincerity and truthfulness among people. Nobody knows with what intention a man is really working. The whole society seems to have given up the path of righteousness. He therefore advises his workers and drivers that in case of some trouble or mishap or in facing a difficult situation, they should be patient and cool-tempered in order to let the situation remain under control and to check the trouble from spreading. Even if they happen to receive slaps or kicks from people, they should remain calm and refrain from retaliation; for, if the situation worsens, it will not be easy to get justice done. He says people sometimes curse him, or call him names on his face or on the telephone but he only smiles and keeps calm. One man took some money as a loan from him. Later on, he refused to pay it back and said "Get your money back through a Court of Law, if you so wish. I will see how the Law can help you in the matter". Maulana Edhi, after relating this experience of his, said that the Law of Truth is not allowed to prevail today. In the courts of law, people swear by God in support of falsehood, he added.

**WE ACT FOR THE SATAN:** He says that so far as our religious belief is concerned, we declare that our "Eeman" is sound and that we fully believe in Allah's Word, but when it comes to our deeds and actions, we accept the leadership of Satan and



follow him blindly. In our social customs, in our marriage ceremonies, on the occasions of births and deaths what we do clearly betrays the Satanic influence. Even our "IBADAAT" (prescribed religious duties towards God and His creatures) are presented before others as big deeds for which we try to take credit and to elicit their respect.

**AN IDEAL HUMAN BEING: A REAL MUSLIM:** The main identity of man is based on his religion. We are Muslims and take pride in being so; but we have drifted far away from our mission, says Maulana Edhi. He adds that sometimes he himself feels ashamed of being called a Muslim, for a real Muslim is an ideal human being.

**CAPITALISTS AND "WADERAS":** Islam, he says, wants us to establish a consultative system for meeting our socio-economic, political and other collective needs and solving problems facing the people. But the capitalists and the 'Waderas' have "chained" Islam, as he puts it, and imposed on people an Islam of their own choice.

**ISLAM IN OUR SERVICE:** He is of the considered view that though we profess to be Muslims, in reality we do not want Islam to rule over us. On the contrary, we try to mould Islam in a way that would serve our own selfish ends.

**CAPITALIST MENTALITY:** The mentality of a big capitalist, according to Maulana Edhi, is like that of a man who stands on the roadside and seeks public contribution in money. He says the capitalist mentality is of such a low order that it is better not to talk about it.

**ULEMA & DOCTORS:** He also says that only if our religious leaders were sincere, they could enforce Islam in the country in a day with all its blessings and benefits for humanity. Similarly, our doctors



can render immense service to the needy and the sick only if they shed off their greed and follow Islamic teachings. But the tragedy is that neither of them wants to practice Islam sincerely.

**DOCTORS AMASSING WEALTH:** His opinion about doctors:

"In these days, doctors do not look upon patients as human beings. Their avarice for wealth is ever-increasing. Medical treatment is becoming more and more expensive. For the low-income group, it is often completely beyond their means, to say nothing of the poor and the indigent. No doctor, dispensary or hospital gives treatment with a missionary spirit, prescribing simple, less expensive and yet efficacious medicines.

Those who develop habits injurious to health, like smoking, are not advised first to give it up. The danger to health resulting from such habits is not fully explained to the patient only because such indulgence on the part of the patient will prolong his illness or delay the cure and this would obviously be to the benefit of the doctor."

**THEY ESTABLISH TRUSTS FOR SELFISH ENDS:**

Maulana Edhi is of the opinion that Paksitan's leadership has been materialistic in its outlook. This is true of both political and religious leadership. They have, for all intents and purposes, put their self-interest and self-aggrandisement above everything else. When we establish some institution or trust, we usually have our own interests in mind. Whether it be with people or with Government, we indulge in deceit and fraud from dawn to dusk. The result is that we have drifted away from the path of living a clean and honest life and establishing a clean, peaceful society. We are only working for chaos, confusion and destruction.



**QURAN - OUR BEST TEACHER & GUIDE:** He says Islam teaches us to live and work for the good of humanity. Quran is our best guide and teacher. But we look towards the West for guidance and not towards the Holy Book.

**QAZI SYSTEM:** Abdus Sattar Edhi believes that there is only one way of reforming society and that is the establishment of Qazi System (appointment of Qazi Courts to dispense Islamic justice and equity). He is of the opinion that this system will solve all problems now facing our society and remove all its ills. For this purpose, we should elect persons of high moral character and personal integrity from among those who are living a retired life. Their tenure of office should be five years, after which period fresh elections should be held. The Qazis should be given full powers to dispense justice according to Islamic teachings. They should be made "AMIRS" (Chiefs or Administrators) in their respective areas. Their judgements should be final like those of Martial Law courts. Evils can be curbed and society can be reformed only in this way. Talks on Radio or Television, religious or moral preachings or other ways to reform individuals and society have failed to achieve this objective and will not succeed in future, too.

**SOCIAL WELFARE UNDER WESTERN SYSTEM:** He says, "Our ideas about social service or people's welfare are mostly based on the system practised in the West. But that system is not wholly applicable to our country. Social service regulations in the Western countries put hindrances in the way of social workers and institutions. That is the reason why I have not got Edhi Trust registered with the Government. If I had done so, this Trust would not have been what it is today."

**ISLAM AS APPLIED TO WOMEN:** Maulana Edhi differs with those who hold that the sphere of women's



activities should not extend beyond their homes. In his considered view, young girls and even married women run away from their homes because we confine them within the four walls of our houses and do not allow them to see the world outside. Those who swear by Islam want to apply it only on womenfolk out of male chauvinism. He asks, "Did our Muslim women not work on the battle front in the early days of Islam? Did they not go outside their homes to perform different duties connected with their household, their children and their relations?" Islam is not a tyrannical religion, he says, but as far as our womenfolk are concerned, our actions are contrary to the teachings of Islam and this has led to the impression, particularly in the West, that these teachings are discriminatory against the women, that women are second-class human beings and that they must bow to the dictates of man. "I have closely observed women and found that evils like fraud, theft, lies are much less in them. Their behaviour with others is much better than men's. They have compassion, sympathy and affection in their hearts. Our religious leaders preach Islam from the pulpit. They hardly work among the people and have little practical experience of men and matters. Most of their FATWAS (religious edicts) are issued on the basis of hearsay. Had they seen people in their day-to-day life as did the KHULAFAT-E-RASHIDEEN, (the early Caliphs of the Holy Prophet) and been practical, had they observed the life of the poor and felt for their poverty, had they tried to understand people's problems, they would not have imposed a ban on women's going out of their homes."

Touching on the economic difficulties that most people today face, he says, "Today a family may consist of five, seven or ten persons, but there may not be more than one earning member to support all of them. The question to ponder is: how long can he continue to meet all their basic necessities of life? The answer is obvious. Those who



can earn a living must earn it; otherwise the family structure will crumble down. Nay, even evil thoughts and evil actions may find their way in. That is the reason why I have decided to bring women forward in every field where they can prove to be useful members of society. Women are being trained as drivers, clerks, nurses, telephone operators and in other professions. They have a greater and better sense of service. What is needed is to strengthen this sense and make good use of it. This is what I am doing. But along with such training and putting them in suitable jobs, I always impress upon them not to show themselves off, to observe the "Purdah" as prescribed in the Holy Quran so as to ward off any man who may have evil thoughts about them. I also ask them to be regular in their prayers, Ramazan fasting, paying Zakat and in carrying out other injunctions of Islam."

Maulana Edhi adds, "Our social structure today is such and taboos are so disabling that women become psychologically sick. They are victims of a tyrannical set-up. I have observed them closely. My APNA GHAR today houses about a hundred run-away girls. If I had not provided them with shelter and other needs in a clean atmosphere, I would not have any clear idea about the causes which led them to behave in the way they had behaved. I now understand their minds better than most people do."

About his own family he says, "I have plainly told my wife and daughters not to be subdued by the customary, disabling social taboos and to serve humanity by coming out of the confines of their home. My elder daughter, Kubra, is working in a poor house. She is so devoted to her social service that even on the occasion of Eid she did not go home for three days."

**FORCED MARRIAGES - 70% DIVORCES:** The number of divorces in our society is on the increase. One



main reason for this situation, according to Maulana Edhi, is that men feel no hesitation and allow no hindrance to come in the way of a second marriage. When he has his desire fulfilled, he begins to care less and less for the rights and needs of his first wife. 30% of divorce cases result from this attitude, while 70% of cases are the result of forced or arranged marriages. Young men and girls are married off by their parents or guardians on grounds of preference for their own community or of religious and sectarian affinity, without caring for the willing consent of those they bind in nuptial ties.

**THEY DRIVE PARENTS MAD AND TURN THEM OUT:** In the Poor House set up by Maulana Edhi, there is a large number of men and women who have been driven out of their homes by their ultra-modern Western-educated sons and daughters because the latter thought that their parents were either socially very backward and "conservative" or an economic burden on them. In either case, the parents were found to be a hindrance in bettering their social and economic status and in their Western-style living and club life. They therefore want to get rid of such parents, bring them to an Edhi centre for admission to the Poor House, saying that he or she is too old and poor, or is a mental case and therefore gives them a lot of trouble or that he or she was found by them on some footpath in a wretched condition.

**POOR HOUSES IN EVERY STREET:** Maulana Edhi foresees the time when Poor Homes will have to be set up in every quarter and when modern sons and daughters would deem it an act of kindness or virtue to get their old parents admitted therein. Or maybe the parents would themselves prefer to get away from their sons and daughters who did not want to live with them any longer, and would therefore seek a peaceful asylum.



**EDHI HOME A SHELTER FOR ANIMALS TOO:** Edhi Centre was originally meant to provide distressed, poor, suffering and helpless human beings with shelter, food, clothing and medical treatment. Soon, however, animals that were cruelly treated by their owners and had as a result become lame or crippled or badly wounded, also began to be sheltered and fed and provided with medical treatment. These animals include donkeys, mules, horses, monkeys, deer, dogs and cats. In view of the increasing number of such animals, a separate project was planned and now a Veterinary Hospital is under construction on a two-acre plot of land on the Super Highway. This will provide medical treatment only to such animals as have been abandoned by their owners and are either sick, or badly injured or crippled.

**FOUL-SMELLING CORPSE AND EDHI:** Haji Abdul Aziz Rangeela, who was elected as member of the Provincial Assembly from Mithadar area, relates this story:

A very young girl of his constituency was lost. For about a week there was no trace about her. Then somebody informed Maulana Edhi that foul smell was coming out of a water tank in the area. He at once arrived at the spot and took out of the tank a corpse which was found to be that of the lost girl. The dead body was in a state of decomposition and the smell was so foul and unbearable that nobody wanted to go near it. It was only Maulana Edhi who could do it.

**A DOG'S DEAD BODY REMOVED FROM ROAD:** One day at 11 O'clock as I reached APNA GHAR in Sohrab Goth, I found Maulana Edhi leaving for the Mental Centre on the Super Highway. I also got into the van alongwith a psychiatrist. About 15 Kilometers from Toll Plaza, the dead body of a



dog was lying on the main road. As the Maulana was absorbed in conversation he could not see the corpse, but after the van had passed beyond it, he happened to see its reflection in the mirror. At once he pulled up, put the van in the reverse gear and got down to remove the corpse. I too followed him and looked about for a tree branch or some other thing with which I could help him in removing the dead body. As I succeeded in finding a branch and returned to the spot where the dead dog was lying, I found to my astonishment that he had already removed it from the road with his bare hands using only a piece of waste paper that he found on the roadside.

**FOOD FOR INDIAN SAILORS:** A phone call informed the Centre that an Indian motor launch is out of order and its sailors have arrived on the shores of Karachi. They were about 20 persons. Their food supplied and run out and they had been hungry for quite a few days. Maulana Edhi immediately instructed his men to deliver food to the alien sailors and to continue to feed them as long as they were on our shores.

**HAPPY TO HANDLE DECOMPOSED CORPSES:** One day I found Maulana Edhi in a very happy mood. In reply to my query he said with a smile on his lips and a light in his eyes that he had been informed of a dead body lying in the jungle near the sea. It was badly decomposed and the odour spreading from it was so unbearable that no one wanted to go near it. He himself then lifted it with his bare hands and after necessary rites it was buried.

**20,000 DEAD BODIES GIVEN "GHUSL":** There may have been no Muslim in the world in the past or in our own day who could claim to have given the prescribed GHUSL to about 20,000 dead bodies during a span of 40 years. This distinction goes



only to Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi. This could well be held as a World Record. On an average, three to twelve dead bodies are handed daily by him for GHUSL. The unclaimed dead bodies of Muslims who breathe their last in the three main hospitals of Karachi, namely, Jinnah Post Graduate Medical Centre, The Civil Hospital and Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, are also given GHUSL by this servant of humanity.

**ON BUREAUCRACY:** Maulana Edhi says, "We have trusted no Government in connection with the problems of the people. There has always been a distance which those opposed to the Government in power have sought to maintain in their own interest. For this purpose they confused our minds with anti-Government propaganda and did not have a word of praise or appreciation even for the good policies of the Government. They did not refrain from levelling false and unfounded charges against those in power. This gave rise to subversive activities, to class struggle, to clashes on grounds of religious or sectarian differences. For all these phenomena, one can lay the blame squarely on those who drive the masses of people on the wrong paths and yet pose themselves as their friends, servants and well-wishers. I too once used to decry bureaucracy. Today people may think I am also a bureaucrat, for I try to keep a distance between myself and those who come to me. There are many who are either professional beggars or pose to be needy or want to use me in some such way as could serve their selfish ends."

**ON SECOND MARRIAGE AND NARCOTICS:** In the light of his experience during the past 40 years, Maulana Edhi is of the firm view that the best and easiest way of putting some one on the path of eventual destruction is to make him a drug addict and the easiest way to destroy a man's peace of mind is to make him have a second wife.



**FAMILY PLANNING NECESSARY:** On the controversial question of family planning, he says "There are two classes in society: i) the poor and oppressed and ii) the rich and oppressors. The latter class controls the distribution of wealth. In view of the way our society works it is necessary to have recourse to things like family planning to establish a sort of equilibrium in society. When distinctions between the poor and the wealthy will fade out and justice and equity will prevail, there will then be no need for family planning."

**IMAMS, PIRS AND THEIR INCOME:** A deputation once came to see Maulana Edhi in his Mithadar office. Among other matters, the question of maintenance of accounts also came under discussion. The Maulana told them that every paisa he received was properly accounted for in his office, but he did not like wasting time in heaps of files. He said, "In our society there are Imams, Pirs and other so-called religious leaders, but no body asks them to render accounts of what they receive. Why this discrimination? They receive large amounts of money and other offerings from their followers and yet do not have to bother about keeping proper accounts of receipts and expenditures. People have confidence in me and my work. They contribute voluntarily in cash and kind, knowing full well that every penny they give will be spent in the right place and for the right cause".

**ADVICE TO MIAN MUNSHI OF LAHORE:** A philanthropist of Lahore built a hospital building at a cost of 15 Million rupees. He requested Maulana Edhi to advise him about its proper use. The latter said "if you wish to hand over this building to me, I will use it as an orphanage, for running a big hospital is not my mission. But if you want that it may be run as a hospital, you may hand it over to the Government. Mian Munshi (the philanthropist) was, however, keen on the hospital idea and so put it under Government control.



**A.C. NOT USED:** The motor vehicle which Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi uses has an air-conditioner installed in it. It is however, surprising to many who are told about it that he has so far never turned on the air-conditioner even in hot summer days. He cares little for his personal comfort.

**KMC REJECTS HIS APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF LAND:** Edhi always controls his feelings and his tongue when other persons or establishments against whom he may have genuine complaints are under discussion, even though they may have caused him worry and retarded his plans. Once when Karachi Metropolitan Corporation was the subject of our conversation, he could not restrain himself and pointed out that his application for land in Orangi Town to open a Centre under Edhi Trust was turned down without any justification. Another application for grant of land to be used as burial ground has been pending for six years. We all know that with Karachi's rapidly multiplying population, more burial grounds are a crying need. He said that KMC is expected to address itself to the needs of the people but the state of its affairs demands that all or most of its employees, particularly its officers, be transferred to other establishments and God-fearing persons be appointed against those posts. He added that a particular religious group seems to have monopolized that civic body which had only added to the problems of the people.

**"INSHA ALLAH" ON OUR LIPS ONLY:** He says we Muslims utter INSHA ALLAH (God willing) many times a day while making a promise or wishing well of someone. But this has become a mere habit. Our intentions are in most cases otherwise and when we speak these words we are really telling lies.

**TRIBUTE TO Z.A. NIZAMI:** Among the Government officials whose services are appreciated by Maulana



Edhi is the Director General of Karachi Development Authority, Mr. Z.A. Nizami. He is of the opinion that the said official has a human approach towards the people and their problems and is God-fearing. In the establishment of new centres under Edhi Trust in different areas of this fast-expanding city, he extended his co-operation without delay and so enabled the Trust to provide facilities that are so urgently needed in emergencies.

1986---A Tragic Year for Karachi: During the twelve months period beginning from October 1986, Karachi was repeatedly the scene of extremely regrettable events in which a large number of human lives were lost and great damage was done to property. Some of these incidents appeared to be the result of terrorist activities instigated by elements not belonging to this country and inimical to Pakistan.

During all those incidents of bloodshed and bomb blasts, Maulana Edhi, Begum Bilqees Edhi and their voluntary social workers remained busy in relief work round the clock. They set one of the finest and greatest examples of selfless service to humanity which will never be forgotten.

Abdus Sattar Edhi thinks that the barbarous killings and bloodshed of 14th December, 1986 in Aligarh Colony and Qasbah Colony were more regrettable because those who instigated them or took active part in killing innocent men, women and children seemed to be totally devoid of all human feelings. It was all a scene of sheer brutality with no trace of humanity. He is of the opinion that bad and inhuman politics was behind the insensible bomb blasts.

After the massacre in Aligarh Colony, the first person to arrive there was Abdus Sattar Edhi. He immediately organized relief work. Edhi Trust ambulances were seen making round after round



to carry the dead and the injured to hospitals. The dead, after being pronounced so by hospitals, were buried. Relief supplies were delivered to the terror-stricken men, women and children who survived and were trying to seek safety behind the closed doors of their own houses or by running away to other places.

Those tragic incidents, with the heart-rending stories of those directly affected by them, have left an indelible impression on the minds of the people of Karachi. They rightly feel that had there been no Edhi Trust and its volunteers, the loss of human lives in those lamentable incidents would have been far greater. To them Edhi is an "angel of mercy".

**EID GIFTS FOR PRISONERS:** The Edhis keep hearing from all kinds of people and places. Even the most unexpected quarters. Both Maulana Edhi and Bilqees Edhi read every single letter received by them. Sometimes they even help each other with the mail. A moving letter was received from the prisoners of the Hyderabad Jail. They had said that Eid was at hand but they neither had clothes to wear on the occasion nor anything special to eat to celebrate Eid---even though they were so unfortunate as to be away from their loved ones. Maulana Edhi immediately responded with clothes, biscuits, fruit and five hundred Jinnah Caps. To make the poor souls feel that they were still a part of humanity and were not abandoned to rot in the dungeons. That somebody still cared!

**NO 'APNA GHAR' OF HIS OWN:** As a measure of Abdus Sattar Edhi's sincere devotion to serving the suffering humanity may be cited the fact he is not only formally an inmate of "Apna Ghar" at Sohrab Goth, Karachi (having formally filled in the prescribed form requesting asylum in "Apna Ghar", and being granted admission against



No:42106), but that he actually does not have a house of his own ('apna ghar').

Even the house (referred to, elsewhere in this book, as the home of the Edhis in Mithadar which is occupied by their children who live there with their maternal grandmother, was actually given to Bilqees in marriage by her mother and still stands in her name and not that of Maulana Edhi.

So that the poor servant of God called Abdus Sattar Edhi does not even have a house of his own-----and he does not want one!

**WANTS HIS BODY TO BE GIVEN TO A MEDICAL COLLEGE:** We all know that death is inevitable. Some die in childhood, some at a young age, some in middle age and some in old age. A few of us may leave this world as centenarians. One of the harsh realities of life is that each one of us has to die at some point of time or other. In the Holy Quran, man's attention has been repeatedly drawn to death, the end of his life in this world in order to impress upon him the need for living a clean, honest and useful life, avoiding evil and doing good deeds for which he will reap a reward in the Hereafter and the Blessings of Almighty and Merciful Allah.

During an interview, I mentioned to Maulana Edhi that he had rendered valuable service to human beings, including bathing with his own hands about 20,000 unclaimed dead bodies and arranging their funeral. One day he, too, would bid farewell to this world. It has become a custom in our society that big men, the wealthy and the influential are given a grand burial and their graves are built in marble, sometimes with domes or marble canopies over them. Even the so-called 'Pirs' are buried in a similar manner. Since, he too had done so much good work for his fellow human beings which has received recognition far and wide, he should also



be buried in a suitable grave at a conspicuous place. On hearing these words of mine, he simply smiled and said "I do not want to be buried in a high, stone grave. I would rather like that my dead body be given to a Medical College where my limbs and bones and other parts may be used for the benefit of other human beings."

## GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

### AND

### MAULANA EDHI

Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi had initially requested the Government of Pakistan in 1981 for grant of permission to use a wireless communication set. This was also mentioned in his letter to the President of Pakistan when he was returning the cheque for the donation to the Edhi Trust. However, the permission in question has not been granted uptil now (December 1987).

Out of 34 Edhi Centres, 18 Centres are presently working without telephones. Today, can you meet an emergency without even a telephone for communications.

Request to the Government of Pakistan has also been made by Maulana Edhi for grant of permission to operate a helicopter service. Not for making money! Only to serve humans and save precious lives by operating a helicopter ambulance, rescue and relief service. Maulana Edhi has yet to hear from the Government of Pakistan.



**Text of the letter addressed to the President of Pakistan returning cheque for Rs.5,00,000/-**

Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi does not want to receive any aid from the Government for the institution he has established. He thinks by seeking or receiving such help he himself would become lazy and careless. But if he will seek contributions from the public, as he does, he will continue to have his sense of responsibility to, and accountability before them. President Zia-ul-Haq sometime ago announced a donation of Rs. 5,00,000/- for Edhi Trust, but Maulana Edhi politely refused to accept it. The text of his letter (translated into English) is given below:

The Honourable President of Pakistan  
& Chief Martial Law Administrator,  
Rawalpindi.

Assalam-o-Alaikum,

I am in receipt of a cheque No.C798318, Book No.C-07984, dated 4-4-1981 sent to me in your behalf as a donation to the Edhi Trust. I am grateful to you for your valued recognition of the services rendered by my wife and me.

In my view the purpose of social service is to render help and assistance to the people, whether they be poor or rich, whenever they are in distress or hit by some calamity, and all such work should be directed towards seeking God's pleasure through serving humanity. I always try to trust Allah while working for the good of the people, to inspire them to work in a similar manner and, with their recognition of the value of social service and the satisfaction one gets through such work, to make them contribute voluntarily with money and materials to the resources of institutions devoted to humanitarian work. I want to carry on my work with full



enthusiasm without seeking any aid or grant from the Government. In view of this, I am returning with thanks the said cheque alongwith a photocopy of Finance Division letter No. F-10(09) D.F.A. (C.A.B.)/81 dated 4-4-81.

Those doing social service should realize that financial resources of the Governemnt are not so vast as to enable it to implement all its schemes at once and also extend aid funds to all institutions engaged in social or humanitarian work. Official procedures and rules and regulations concerning such aid and grants are also time-consuming and this is parhaps unavoidable.

Social workers should come into this field without any thoughts of material rewards or of doing a favour to the Government. They should be enthused with a religious fervour to serve people and their service should only be for God's pleasure. They should work in a manner that would inspire people to provide funds for the cause. During the meetings of Zakat and Ushr Committees, I have tried to inspire members to work for the needy and the distressed in such a way as would impress people of their respective areas and attract their willing contributions. They should not be a burden on the Government in any way.

Difficulties are usually met with by social workers. One has never heard of any one who has faced no difficulty in serving humanity.

I am deeply grateful to you and the Government for acceding to my request for provision of a wireless set.

I wish to serve my people and my country in my personal capacity without any hindrance or restrictions. For the work that Almighty Allah has assigned to me and has in His Mercy enabled me



to carry on with, I am grateful to Him with all my humble being and I pray to Him to save me from any thoughts of greatness or publicity for myself. Islam Zindabad - Pakistan Zindabad.

Your humble servant,

(ABDUS SATTAR EDHI)



## B I L Q E E S   E D H I

---the life-partner of Edhi

Bilqees Edhi is the daughter of the Late Usman Memon and Rabia Hajiani. The family hails from Kathiawar. Rabia Hajiani had two sons and one daughter when her husband died. Usman's permanent source of livelihood was a bicycle shop which continued to provide sustenance to the family after his death. Rabia Bai wanted to give her children good education. For this purpose and to augment her income, she became a teacher in a school which paid her Rs.25/- per month. The elder son, Iqbal, fared well at school and college and passed the B.A. examination, but his younger brother, Mahmood Ghaznavi, could not go beyond High School. Bilqees, too, could not pursue her education after Matriculation.

Meanwhile, Hajiani Rabia became interested in nursing. Twenty four years ago when Maulana Edhi was running a maternity home and dispensary, she called on him and asked if she could be trained as a nurse. In those days, the Memon community regarded nursing as a sinful profession for women, but Maulana Edhi was training them as nurses despite the community's opposition. Rabia Bai was enrolled as a trainee nurse on a monthly remuneration of Rs.80/-. She started her training alongwith other girls. One day she was seen entering the premises accompanied by a little, naughty girl who began to tamper with things and scatter them around. Maulana Edhi was, naturally, annoyed and asked Rabia Bai not to bring the girl there again.

With the passage of time, Bilqees grew into a teenage girl. Her mother then thought that she should also get training in nursing. So she talked to Maulana Edhi about it. At first he did not agree but eventually yielded to her repeated requests. Abdus Sattar Edhi was now about a middle-aged



man. He had all along been a very busy man and considered marital life a hinderance in his mission. He would, however, often recall the words of his deceased mother: "Sattar, when will you get married? When shall I have the happiness to hug your child? Do you intend to get married only when I have passed away?"

His mother could not live long enough to see her cherished desire fulfilled. Now, with advancing age he found himself faced with the problem of finding a girl who would agree to be his wife. The life he was living had little to offer to a marriage partner. Almost all twenty four hours of his day were spent in the dispensary. The room he lived in was by no means comfortable. He had no regular hours of eating or rest or sleep. Directly or indirectly, he proposed to some of the girls receiving training in his nursing home but none agreed. Eventually, he sent the proposal to Bilqees through her aunt, and luckily she accepted it without any hesitation. After a few months, in 1966, they got married. Abdus Sattar Edhi was then 34 years old and Bilqees was 19.

I have had the opportunity of seeing and knowing Bilqees at close quarters. As she stepped on the threshold of youth she had started learning nursing with her mother. Maulana Edhi's personality is such that it leaves a lasting impression on those who happen to work with him. Bilqees had received her training in nursing under his guidance. It was, therefore, natural that his character and his principles greatly impressed her young mind. That was the reason why Bilqees agreed to his marriage proposal when other girls had turned it down and extended her active co-operation in his mission of serving humanity.

Their happy union has given them two sons and two daughters. With the passage of time her enthusiasm and zeal for social service are getting



deeper and stronger. One could say that her eagerness and readiness to serve humanity is in no way less - may be even more - intense than that of Maulana Edhi. We find today another institution, named Bilqees Edhi Foundation, devoted to the service of humanity. Maulana Edhi tells us that the contributions being received by the Bilqees Foundation surpass even those that come in the name of Edhi Foundation. If there is an accident, or some kind of help is needed for the inmates of jails, or girls who have run away from their homes are to be repatriated or rehabilitated, one would find Bilqees present there in person to do the needful.

When I talked to Bilqees about the training of two thousand girls in the Buffer Zone Centre in Karachi, I found that she had clear-cut ideas in this regard and wanted to execute her plans without delay. The other day a run-away girl from Islamabad arrived in Karachi. The matter came to the notice of Bilqees who received the girl, and after two months she agreed to return to her parents. Bilqees booked air passage for herself, her daughter Kubra and the girl and personally delivered her to her parents in Islamabad.

Bilqees has a deep love for humanity. Whenever she learns that some illegitimate child has been strangled to death, or beheaded or cut to pieces by cruel-hearted parents to hide their sin, she cannot help shedding tears out of heart-felt sorrow. She says the parents of such babies commit a sin to satisfy their lustful desire and when their illegal and unholy union results in the birth of a baby---who, after all, is innocent---they commit the further sin of destroying a human life. If only they could think of informing one of the Edhi Centres, we would silently take away their illegitimately born and unwanted baby and save them from committing the second inhuman sin.

Bilqees works in the office of their Mithadar



Centre for two to three hours daily. She writes letters to those who seek some information or help. Cases of women in need of assistance, or of providing household necessities to those girls who are being married but their parents are too poor to give them even the minimum requirements of establishing a household, or to the inmate girls whose marriage has been arranged by the Edhis, are looked after by her. Two or three times every week she visits "Apna Ghar" in Sohrab Goth. She says, like her husband, she too feels restless in their own home. She spends the night in their dispensary in Mithadar where her husband also rests, while their children are under the care of their grandmother in their home.

**BILQEES EDHI---**Mature, Confident and Enthusiastic: I had interviewed Bilqees Edhi in January 1986 in connection with the compilation of my book "EDHI EK SHAKHSIYAT, EK KIRDAR" (Edhi a personality, a character). In August 1987 when I went to interview her again, I felt that in that period of a little more than a year she had become a much more mature lady and was brimming with confidence. She was enthusiastic about making women active and respectable members of society. She had a keen perception of their problems and wanted to solve them in the shortest possible time. During that period, a Foundation named after her had come into being and an institution for girls called "AL-BANAAT" had also been established.



## VOLUNTEERS OF EDHI

Since the time Abdus Sattar Edhi stepped in the field of social seltare, about 38 years back, he has had to come across not hundreds but thousands of workers. There was a time when Maulana Edhi was a member of the volunteer corps and went around on a bicycle collecting goat and sheep-skins of sacrificial animals. People voluntarily used to help him collect the skins. The Maulana never forgot those old-time friends and compatriots. Instead, as the work grew bigger and bigger, he absorbed them on a regular basis in the organization. On the top of that list of volunteers appears the name of Haji Iqbal, who is an epitom of honesty, sincerity, diligence, and dutiful love of social service. Ismail Vayani is a conscientious worker. Haji Iqbal Yousuf is another worker full of sincerity to the cause of social service. Anwar, Aminbhai, Abdus Sattar Khaqani, Anwar Kazmi and Malik Fazal Hussain, etc., are also carrying out their assigned duties in a highly efficient manner and with a zeal for the cause.

Since Maulana Edhi belongs to the Memon community, and he has worked with quite a few organizations of the community, he has at hand a large number of volunteers who can drive and are Gujrati-speaking. These senior, highly experienced drivers are the cream of his corps of volunteers. It is these very drivers who have no hesitation in picking up decomposed corpses, jumping into raging fires, and being continuously on-duty for even 36 hours at a stretch---the limits of human endurance to which they gladly stretch their conscience-bound souls. If, in view of the fast-changing times, these drivers are provided even the basic facilities (which may not be anywhere near the international standards for people engaged in such selfless humanitarian missions), they are perfectly capable of carrying this social service work to much greater heights.



## C E N T R E S

A number of projects have been undertaken under the Edhi Welfare Centre, Abdus Sattar Edhi Foundation and Bilqees Edhi Foundation. To complete these projects as early as possible, work is going on day and night. Some details concerning them are given below:

**"APNA GHAR" (SOHRAB GOTH CENTRE):** After founding the first centre in Boulton Market area, the second one has been set up in Sohrab Goth under the name of APNA GHAR. It houses orphaned, indigent, down-trodden and helpless individuals who have no place to go to. Here they feel as if it was their own home, which the name APNA AGHAR literally means. For some time, heroin addicts and those suffering from mental illness were also admitted in APNA GHAR, but after the opening of the Super Highway Centre they have been moved there. Now the Sohrab Goth Centre provides asylum to girls who run away from their parental homes for some reason or the other, to old or crippled parents who are turned out by their sons, and to the sick and disabled persons.

By the end of the current year, a complete emergency centre is also being set up here. It will provide timely medical aid to victims of road or other accidents in Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Federal B Area, New Karachi and other places in its vicinity. The operation theatre of this Emergency Centre has been completed. It will provide surgical aid to such victims as may need it urgently. In view of great loss of life in major accidents or as a result of terrorist activities like that in which a Pan-American plane was hijacked and the fatal casualties resulting from bomb explosions like the one that occurred in Saddar area of Karachi this year (1987), an airconditioned morgue is also being constructed at the Sohrab Goth Centre. It will accomodate 60 dead bodies at a time till they are identified and/or



claimed by their next of kin. It will be the largest air-conditioned morgue in the country. On the completion of the Emergency Centre, the Blood Bank of Nazimabad Centre will also be shifted here so that those receiving grave injuries and needing blood transfusion may be immediately attended to.

**BUFFER ZONE CENTRE:** A Centre is under construction in Buffer Zone by the Bilqees Edhi Foundation. It has been planned as a hostel, the first of its kind in Pakistan, where 2,000 girls will be accommodated and trained in various arts and crafts. Maulana Edhi, who during his long years of service to humanity has closely observed women, is of the opinion that they are better workers than men and can also work longer. Their enthusiasm for social service is also greater than men's. Several years back, the idea of training women in different occupations and crafts occurred to his mind. He could not, however, implement it then because of paucity of funds. Since that difficulty has now been overcome, he is able to give it a concrete shape. The hostel for girls in Buffer Zone is expected to be completed within two years. It will impart training to girls in nursing, first aid, maternity home duties, driving and different handicrafts as taught in industrial homes. Education upto the High School level will also be imparted and those desiring and deserving higher education will be provided facilities to receive it.

On completion of training, each girl will be helped with necessary funds to set up centres similar to Karachi's Edhi Centres in different parts of the country. They will receive a minimum salary of Rs.2,000/- per month. Two motor vehicles will also be provided at each centre.

The girls trained in the hostel will also be instructed to set up training centres for girls in all places where they would be establishing the initial Edhi-like centres for social service. It is



thus hoped that within 10 years a large social service force will come into being. After completion of the plans drawn up for Pakistan, similar centres are proposed to be established in other developing countries.

Construction work of the Buffer Zone centre is going on at top speed. As a temporary measure, part of the vast area available for this centre is being used to house mentally deranged women.

**KORANGI CENTRE:** Being constructed on an area of 5,000 sq yards, this centre has been beautifully designed. 16 rooms are under construction, while in the twelve rooms now almost complete marble has been liberally used. Boys and girls who have run away from their parental homes and those who suffer from mental illness are being accommodated in this Centre. At present there are 125 such children, of whom 45 are mental cases. Children between 4 and 12 years of age are being given proper education to make them useful citizens of the country. Besides the customary education, religious education is also being imparted to them.

A doctor visits the centre daily for medical check-up of the children and prescribes necessary medicines for them. Philanthropists are extending their co-operation in the construction of the centre. Their names are inscribed on marble slabs fixed on the walls. These bear the names of the late Syed Muhammad Fakhruddin, a former Registrar of Karachi, Haji Jalaluddin, Haji Abdul Karim and Haji Muhammad Iqbal Bhabha. Only in two rooms, the marble slabs fixed in the walls have no name but only the words "A woman, servant of Allah" and under this in the second line the words "BEREAVED SONS".

At this centre 10 motor vehicles are kept ready for any emergency.



**NAZIMABAD CENTRE:** Since the Edhis have not so far met with success in finding a suitable place in this area where a Centre could be built, the Nazimabad Centre has been set up, temporarily for the present, in a ground floor flat of M.Y. Plaza. In view of the large population of Nazimabad and North Nazimabad, 35 ambulances have been provided to this centre. It has a Blood Bank where the names and addresses of more than 1000 donor members are on record with their Blood Groups. These donor members are called to the centre to give their blood to meet any emergency. As donors, they charge no price for the blood given by them.

If a philanthropist or the Government provides a suitable plot of land in the area, the Nazimabad Centre can be turned into a larger one with more sections and a more spacious room for storing blood.

**SUPER HIGHWAY CENTRE:** This Centre is located at a distance of 42 kilometres from Karachi. It is almost midway between Karachi and Hyderabad, the two main cities of Sind. Situated along the Super Highway, it occupies an area of 65 acres approximately and has water and electricity facilities. At present, mental patients and heroin addicts are accommodated in this Centre, while a large mental hospital is under construction. It will have female wards on 30 acres and male wards on another 30 acres. A veterinary hospital will be built on an area of two acres. On another two acres a centre for medical and psychological treatment of drug addicts will be constructed. On the remaining one acre, a First Aid Centre will be built. Construction work is in progress. The total cost of all the buildings is estimated at 40 million rupees and the project is expected to be completed in 5 years.

This will be the largest Mental Hospital in Pakistan.



**CLIFTON CENTRE:** For this Centre, a plot of land adjacent to the Main Market has been allotted by Karachi Development Authority (K.D.A.) Bilqees Edhi foundation will undertake the construction of this Centre. New-born abandoned children will be looked after here and will be given away to the families with no children of their own and desirous of adopting them. This centre will be as beautiful and attractive as children themselves are. Arrangements for setting up an organization for blood transfusion to children are also underway at Clifton. Anaemic patients will benefit from it.

**LANDHI CENTRE:** This Centre will also cover an area of 5,000 sq. yards. It will house 2000 disabled and sick children who will receive necessary education and training in various crafts. The Centre will start working next year.

**QASBA COLONY CENTRE:** This colony is on Manghopir Road and within it an Edhi Centre is under construction on a plot measuring 5000 sq. yards. Children and adults who are or have been disabled will be accommodated here, with separate wards for male and female adults. The Centre will also have an Eye Hospital with all the necessary modern equipment.

It will accommodate 50 in-patients. The ground floor is almost complete and other floors are expected to be added in the near future. Patients who cannot even walk and those who have to be fed with others' help will be given preference here. Since they are not and cannot be made useful members of society, all necessary help will be provided to them to live peacefully as long as God may like them to.

**LAHORE CENTRE:** A plot of land in Samanabad has been obtained for the Lahore Centre. It is planned to set up thereon an Emergency Centre and an "APNA GHAR" as they are in Karachi.



Maybe, by the time this book is published and is in your hands, work on the construction of this Centre will have started. In view of the road and other accidents occurring in Lahore, a large Ambulance Centre is also being set up near the Ravi Toll Tax Post so that First-Aid may be given to victims of accidents on Sheikhupura Road and Gujranwala - Rawalpindi road. Ten small ambulance centres are also being set up immediately.

**HYDERABAD CENTRE:** A plot of land has been obtained for setting up a Centre in Hyderabad also, which is the second largest city of Sind. Construction work is expected to be taken up very soon. This Centre will also be a large one with all the necessary arrangements as in other Centres of Karachi.

**ISLAMABAD CENTRE:** This centre will cover an area of 5,000 sq. yds. It has been allotted by Capital Development Authority (CDA). The centre will start working next year.



Before he founded Edhi Welfare Centre, Maulana Edhi had published a report about his social service activities from 1949 to 1974 and his future plans. That report, reproduced here for information of readers, shows that whatever he has done so far in the way of service to humanity was in accordance with a well-considered programme.

**(MAULANA) A. SATTAR EDHI (MEMON)**

**PRESENTS**

***A SHORT REPORT OF***  
**HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES**

\*

**TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE**

**(1949 to 1974)**

**Phone : 22 52 25**

**A. SATTAR EDHI**  
MITHADHAR - BOMBAY BAZAR,  
KARACHI-2 (Pakistan)



## **FREE SERVICES ROUND THE CLOCK**

The following free services are provided round the clock:

(1) Ambulance Car (2) Centre to take care of unwanted abandoned infants (3) Burial Service for poor and unclaimed dead bodies (4) Centre to take care of lonely, infirm, old, disabled and sick persons (100 beds) (5) Centre to provide immediate relief (6) Free Dispensary working round the clock (7) X-Ray and Laboratory (8) Centre to provide help to patients of T.B. and Cancer (9) Free T.B. Clinic working round the clock.

### **(1) AMBULANCE CAR**

Ambulance car is providing service in Karachi as well as in the interior. It has travelled more than 3,50,000 miles upto now.

### **(2) ABANDONED INFANTS**

90 unwanted and abandoned infants were taken care of and afterwards given to childless families for adoption after full investigation.

### **(3) BURIAL OF POOR PERSONS**

Upto now 7874 dead bodies have been buried. These include bodies of poor men and women, also unclaimed bodies many of which were in advanced stage of decay.

### **(4) MOHTAJ HOME**

90 percent patients admitted in Volunteer Charitable Hospital were such poor infirm and disabled persons who were abandoned by their near and dear ones and they had no place to go after release from the Hospital. For this reason its name has been changed into "Retired Persons and Mohtaj Home". Admissions are given on both temporary and permanent basis. It has at present 150 beds. Hundreds of persons are benefitted by it every month. They all are provided with food, simple clothing and whenever need arises with simple treatment.

### **(5) FREE DISPENSARY ROUND THE CLOCK**

Daily 1200 to 1500 patients are taking benefit of this department. Six doctors are employed on round the clock basis. There are also facility for home visit by the doctor, for which identity card is necessary.

### **(6) FREE MATERNITY HOME**

Every month 50 to 70 deliveries are being performed in this department. It has at present 40 beds. Mothers are provided with simple medicines also. Upto now a total of 14000 children have been born in this Maternity Home.

### **(7) X-RAY LABORATORY**

Every patient admitted here in is provided free X-Ray and laboratory service.



#### **(8) CENTRE FOR URGENT EMERGENCY RELIEF**

This fund is to provide urgent help on such catastrophies such as fire, storm, rain, etc. and also to help lost children, refugees and victims of sudden calamities. They are provided help on modest basis and attempts are made to solve their problems.

#### **(9) EQUIPMENTS FOR POOR PATIENTS**

There are many poor, helpless, infirm, disabled, patients lying in their home. Equipments to facilitate their natural needs, hot-water bags, icebags, crutches, patachavis, wheel-chairs are supplied to them on a nominal deposit. Very poor persons are exempted from this deposit requirements. Thousands of persons have benefited from this service.

#### **(10) FREE T. B. CLINIC ROUND THE CLOCK.**

Hundreds of persons are coming to this clinic round the clock from far and near. They are given free supply of T.B. tablets for one month.

#### **(11) EYE SPECTACLE AND BLOOD BANK**

700 persons have also taken benefit of eye, spectacle and blood bank.

#### **RELIEF ACTIVITIES :**

A short report is being presented herewith about the relief services rendered for the unhappy tortured and persecuted refugees from East Pakistan who began to arrive here after the internecine trouble started there in March 1971 and for the flood victims of Sind & Punjab in West Pakistan.

#### **REFUGEES FROM EAST PAKISTAN**

A temporary camp in Orangi Town area of Karachi was started for the unhappy refugees coming from East Pakistan and they were provided with Juggies, food cooking utensils, cloths, medicine etc. This relief activity was carried on for eight months upto October 1971 in which following items were provided to the destitute: (1) 2763 Juggies (2) 3040 maund rice and dal (3) 35150 new and secondhand utensils (4) 75650 new & secondhand cloths (5) 3200 blankets and razais (6) 13 Sewing machines.

A free dispensary was also started and thousands of jobless refugees were provided with employment.

#### **EXPENSE OF MORE THAN 6 LAC RUPEES**

In addition to the above relief activities the refugees were provided free trucks and other conveyance from the sea-port and the airport to Orangi Town and on this single activity more than six lac rupees were spent.

#### **'ON REHABILITATION FRONT'**

Relief work was again started for the refugees from East Pakistan who came here from November 1973 to May 1974. All possible help was started for all refugees



from East Pakistan living in Orangi Town, Landhi and other areas of the city. This relief work is still continuing. Details of the relief provided upto now is as follows:

(1) 83 buggies (2) 763 maund rice and dal (3) 8353 new utensils (4) 19417 new and secondhand clothing (5) 32 Singer Sewing Machines (6) 1755 Razais.

Moreover hundreds of patients were given medicine or given admission in the hospital, several maternity cases were also admitted, free burial service was provided for several destitutes, financial help was given to several persons to start small business after proper scrutiny and several others were provided with services these Activities are still in progress.

#### 24 HOUR SERVICE

Arrangements were made to provide every possible service round the clock. We consider the suffering of refugees as our own suffering. You know very well that in 1971 we alone were rendering these services single-handedly. Now we pay millions of thanks to Almighty Allah that at present government and many other organisations and many individuals are doing good work in their own ways. We have only one prayer day and night to Almighty Allah that He may solve difficulties of these unhappy persons because we sincerely believe that :-

KAROGI KISIKA BHALA  
TO HOGA TUMHARA BHALA

#### DEVASTATING FLOODS IN WEST PAKISTAN

The year of 1974 will be remembered as the year of devastating floods in West Pakistan for many years. Relief activities were started immediately. Relief camps were established at Moro and Daulatpur in Sind and even at Khanpur in Punjab and relief supplies were distributed to the flood victims. It should be noted here that personnel of Railway, Police and Local Committees gave ample and praiseworthy co-operation in these activities.

#### IF SUCH SERVICE MAY BE STARTED IN WHOLE COUNTRY . . . .

If such humanitarian activities which I am doing among yourselves could be started everywhere in the whole country, then all social political, religious, capitalist and socialist exploitation could be eliminated from our country, But alas everybody prefers to become leader, and not a social worker.

#### AT THE TIME OF WAR OF 1971

During the war days of 1971, we have provided every possible service with the spirit of an humble worker. Our three ambulances were rushing immediately at bombed out places and were providing first aid to injured persons and removing them to Civil, Jinnah and our own Hospital. We were also making complete burial arrangements for the dead persons. During that period only in Karachi we buried 342 martyrs.



## REFUGEES FROM UGANDA.

The Government of Uganda expelled thousands of citizens of Asian origin. Many families belonged to Pakistan. Some families having British passports went to that country, while remaining families came to Pakistan. Many families were destitute, having lost all their earnings. There were eight Punjabi families, who were living in Uganda since 75 years and their family links with Pakistan were quite cut-off. This Organisation helped all these families with cash, food-stuffs and cloths and helped them to find some service or business. At present they are all satisfactorily rehabilitated.

## HELP TO HOMELESS

Many persons are coming to Karachi from interior for treatment or for service. Many such persons are shelter-less having nowhere to go. Also many families living in Karachi become homeless due to rain or fall of buildings. This Organisation provides all such homeless persons and families some temporary residence and also gives them other necessities, till they find other suitable accommodation.

## ANNUAL 8 to 10 LAC RUPEES

Nearly eight to ten lac rupees annually are required for the above-mentioned services which are provided free to everybody without any distinction of caste, creed or colour, it is regretted that the community is not paying enough attention. Community since last many years is observing that all the above-mentioned services are being performed in the way of God and only to please Him and these services will continue in future in accordance to His wishes. All these services are performed most economically, but everybody must admit the fact that field of humanitarian service has also been adversely affected due to the recent price-spiral.

## DURING 24 Hours

During 24 hours so many helpless, unemployed, old, infirm, disabled, abandoned, unhappy, tortured and poor persons are coming to get admission and medicine and other help which is being provided without any distinction of caste, creed or colour. Their tales are full of tears, pain and heart-burning. Moreover, many dead bodies of poor and unclaimed persons and children, which includes several bodies in advanced stage of decay, are given decent burial.

## LIVING GRAVEYARD

If the daily newspapers become ready to write and publish the tortures and atrocities heaped on poor persons, patients and other helpless men and women then many hearts will tremble and a great upheaval will be created in the society. If anybody does not believe in this and may wish to see and study these living dead and their dark world, then he may visit our place and observe all this while sitting beside me. There is only one question troubling me: From where may I collect so much amount needed for their treatment and to provide for their need?



Where are those philanthropists who may help this self-respecting beggar? To issue appeals for help every now and then is also nothing but a self-degrading act.

#### **WHEN WILL THE FIRE BECOME COOL**

When will fire become cool which is torturing and devouring poor and helpless persons? Will somebody say when their economic position will improve? And when they will be able to live with self-respect?

#### **IN THE NAME OF ALLAH**

I have only one aim and that is to serve people whatsoever beliefs or thoughts they may have. According to some suspicious persons and also who believe in criticism for the sake of criticism I am a thief, badmash, adulterous, cruel, cheat and full of each and every vice and crime.

All-knowing, All-powerful Allah knows what really I am, and the humble humanitarian services for the humanity performed with spirit and emotion and also with utmost economy. Against this I say to all these so-called "Imuanders" and critics and scions of philanthropists in the name of Allah that not one or two but hundreds of free dispensaries and hospitals are required to serve the suffering humanity. They may establish only one or two free dispensaries and a hospital and an ambulance service on a small scale. Only then they will realise how all these services are being maintained. And how I myself is providing all these services in the midst of atmosphere full of sycophancy, irresponsibility and harassment. Under such circumstances if even a ten percent work of anybody may be done then he is really lucky.

#### **ACCOUNT IS OPEN**

All accounts and others record of services are being kept open always for public. If anybody wants to see them, he may come to our office. He may also call the accounts at his home. It may be noted that every year the accounts are audited through a registered auditor and then they are printed. If any person who have no desire to contribute and only for this aim may say many things then he may do so, and I do not care about such persons or their talks.

#### **FUND WANTED ONLY IN THE WAY OF ALLAH**

It may be remembered that I do not want to collect fund by sycophancy, cheating, deceit or pretension.

I do not want any fund from suspicious persons, recommenders and persons trumpeting their charities.

I only want fund in the way of Allah to work only for Himself.



## **I AM FULLY AWARE**

Many persons are trying to take undue benefits under cover of my humanitarian activities and if they feel that I am going to be an obstacle in their way then they try to shake earth and sky to defame and malign me. I am fully aware of them. Sometime they are also threatening me to murder me or to involve me in some kind of spurious litigations. These are their old ways. May Allah be good to them who are burning in the fire of jealousy. Humanitarian activities is such a field in which one must be ready to give every sacrifice. If even my death may occur on this path, then what other death would be better than this? Let these wretched men try their best to harm me. I am sure of one thing that Allah will let me do every work which He wants to be done through myself. I have only one prayer on my lips day and night, "O, Almighty Allah let my each and every moment pass in humanitarian work, and let me worry about only Thine wishes and not about thine creatures.

## **200 HOSPITALS CAN BE ESTABLISHED**

Muslims have very little interest in charitable activities, and even when some persons might have started such works then other persons by raising doubts and creating disruptions might have already demolished them. 60 million persons are wasting five million rupees per year in extravagant expenses and activities. If this fact may be realised and this huge sum may be used in right way then 200 free hospitals can easily be established and no patient may die for want of proper treatment. But nobody wants to do anything and everybody wants only to point out errors of other persons. If such extreme punishment like death by hanging could be provided for the crimes of extravagancy and enormous merriment, then billions of rupees may be saved which can be used to save millions of innocent lives and also to provide for their education, treatment and to eliminate poverty from the country.

## **PATIENTS COMING FROM OTHER HOSPITALS**

Many poor patients from some large hospitals are coming to me. In our country children are dying like insects due to poverty. Many poor patients of T. B. and other diseases are coming for treatment from hundreds of miles. They are given T. B. medicine for one month without any delay or long procedure and they are advised to come back after one month.

I say to the government to cut down by 50% each expense of the country and to increase health facilities. Sound healthy people will naturally be able to defend the country in a much better way.

## **THIS IS NOT TRUE**

Many persons believe that I am getting funds of many millions of rupees. This is not true. I am doing all these humanitarian activities to the best of my abilities and with utmost economy and simplicity and burdened with many difficulties and want of money. If anybody wants proof about this, then he is invited to come and sit beside me and see for himself.



Some allegations are also heard that I have amassed millions of rupees by theft and I have several shops and bungalows. They are speaking as they wish, and exhibiting their jealousy by baseless allegations. I challenge them all to prove these allegations, and if they are not ready to accept this challenge then why they are wishing to destroy whatsoever humanitarian activities being conducted for the relief of the poor persons? Why have they become prey of jealousy? It will be indeed a pleasure if these persons may jump in the active field and compete with me by starting the same kind of works which I am doing at present, so that some benefit may reach to the suffering humanity.

#### I AM NOT A BEGGAR

I have enough sources to take care of my humble personal needs. I am not a beggar only for the sake of suffering humanity. If anybody wants to serve, then he has to confront difficulties and even shoes may be thrown at him. Field of service is such that satisfaction may not be given to every body. Many persons consider me having bad mood. When daily one has to answer hundreds of persons then it is but natural that mood may become bad some times. In spite of this I always like constructive criticism. Due to this I get many opportunities to improve my work. I even say that if any person is ready to provide for all the expenses of the organisation, then I am ready to sit beside such person and to serve as a peon. May Allah save me from pride.

I also know that many persons are getting services from me by various pretensions and misrepresentations, and are giving large funds to other organisations. What name may be given to this?

#### WHY POORS ARE NOT GETTING THEIR RIGHTS?

Everybody is speaking about poverty. Everybody is aware of its pains, troubles and difficulties. Nearly everybody is liable to come under the wheels of poverty at one time or other. We are well aware of this fact, but inspite of this it is not understandable why we are not living economically while we are affluent and conspiring not to give rights of poor persons. Are these our manners of religion and humanity? Are these not deceit of religious principals?

#### SEPERATE ORGANISATIONS.

I do not want to serve in one or two places. I want to serve as much as possible and at as many places as the funds permit me and as Allah wishes. Moreover I want to serve secretly hundreds of poor suffering persons keeping their honour and self-respect



intact, and without any interference, recommendation or gratitude showing from any circles. And I want to keep the "burden of infamy" on my neck alone. As I have to work in a society full of jealousy and conspiracies and I want to steer from the infighting of members, hairpulling of elections and quarrels over accounts I am compelled to establish three or four organisations. I am keeping their accounts separate and by issuing separate appeals, I am trying to get funds to continue my various humanitarian activities. I have no desire for any chair or fame. The name of Allah is enough for me.

Many philanthropists and charitable persons are giving thousands of rupees without taking any receipts. I have thousands of receipts of such contributions -- in my record. I have no need to form organisations, to get them registered, to take permission to collect funds or to keep accounts. I have to give my true account to only Allah, but only to give satisfaction to myself I am keeping accounts and getting registrations of organisations and permissions for collection of funds. I have only to collect funds in the name of Allah and to spend in the name of Allah. If anybody will try to involve me in any kind of legal web then, Insha - Allah, I will be ready to collect what-so-ever funds without receipts to serve my unhappy brethren on somewhat smaller scale. I, A. Sattar Edhi, myself is an Organisation.

Under these circumstances

"KAR KSIKA BHALA HOGA TUMHARA BHALA  
DE USKA BHI BHALA NA DE USKA BHI BHALA"

A. SATTAR EDHI.

(1) Madina Association.

(2) Bantva Memon Volunteer Corps.

Boulton Market, Mithadhar, Karachi-2.

Phone: 22 52 25

Note: We believe in issuing public appeal for contributions. We do not believe approaching individuals for fund. If anybody has slightest doubt regarding our services or accounts then he may see us personally or call to his house to get and see each and every detail.

One thing may be noted, I am not an angel, but merely a human being. Errors are done by me also. With open heart I admit them. It is also clear to you as sunlight that I fought against many difficulties and in future also I will continue to do the same.

This fact should be noted that it is not easy to do some good for others, and if anybody may do same good for others and he himself remains free of any difficulty then it must be counted as a miracle.



## FUTURE PROGRAMME

We have decided to establish an OLD PERSONS HOME in the near future Insha-Allah, to provide succour and shelter to such poor old, infirm, disabled, abandoned, sick and imbecile persons who have no place to go on this wide earth. A large place would be purchased for this purpose. Naturally this huge project require large sums of money and we hope that our philanthropic persons would contribute whole heartedly for this humanitarian project.



## THE MEMON COMMUNITY

Maulana Abus Sattar Edhi belongs to the Memon community. This community has produced history-making jewels of personalities in almost every field ---social and public service, education, religion, trade and industry, journalism and politics. Maulana Abdus Sattar Edhi, who has earned himself world-wide respect by devoting himself to humanitarian service is also one such jewel. This chapter, which will enlighten my readers on the achievements of other illustrious members of the Memon community, will be interesting reading.

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About five hundred years back, seven hundred families of the Lohana community settled in Sind and embraced Islam at the hand of Hazrat Pir Syed Yousufuddin Qadri, a direct descendant of the sub-continent's great sufi saint Hazrat Ghous-ul-Azam Shaikh Mohyuddin Abdul Qadir Jilani (Rehmat Allah Alaih-i-). These converts were given the surname "Momin" which in the course of time degenerated to "Memon". And that is the surname which this community still has.

At the time they embraced Islam, the ancestral homes of the Memons were situated around Thatta, Hala and some neighbouring areas. The Memons later migrated from Sind to the Kutch, Kathiawar and Gujrat areas. While those that stayed behind came to be known as Sindhi Memons, the settlers of Kutch are even today called Kutchi Memons, those of Kathiawar are known as Halai Memons, and the Gujrat settlers are distinguished as the Tharadi Memons.

Basically, the Memons were traders and agriculturists. However, members of the Sindhi Memon community also took up the weaving and the teaching professions besides trade and agriculture.



The nineteenth century saw the Memons spread to every nook and cranny of the sub-continent. At the beginning of the twentieth century Memons could be found in such far-flung areas as the Malabar coast, Madras, Berar, and Bengal in the sub-continent. And even beyond that---in Sri Lanka (then known as Ceylon), Burma, Malaysia (then, Malaya), Indonesia, and even Africa. They went everywhere as traders and time saw them established as traders, industrialists and, in general, a very rich community.

The winning qualities of this God-fearing community were truth and honesty. They proved themselves by word and deed which inspired confidence. Their word came to be a guarantee for deals worth millions. And it is so even today.

The Memon community's basic qualities of being ethical and God-fearing made it trustworthy. Wherever they went for business, they first built there the House of God---the Masjid. If a mosque was already there, they would cater to its needs first.

The Memons have constructed a very large number of mosques in the Indo-Pakistan sub-continent as well as the other countries they settled in. Particularly notable among them are the Zakaria Masjid of Calcutta, the Minara Masjid of Bombay, the Memon Masjid of Karachi, the Bait-ul-Mukarram Masjid of Dhaka (Bangladesh), the Masjid in Kobe (Japan), and the Jama Masjid of Durban (South Africa).

In the present times as ever before, the Memon community has undertaken lots of humanitarian projects. They range in nature from the educational and medical to the social, cultural, welfare, and religious institutions. Caste or creed are no bar for the beneficiaries. These projects, established not only in the sub-continent but in foreign lands,



too, are a living testimony to the patriotism, religious fervour and above all, God-fearing humanitarianism of the Memon community. It would be perfectly justifiable to say that in the world of today this is one community which has emphatically displayed and proved its adherence to the laudable objectives of maintaining the strength of character, subscribing to the principle of social justice, and serving humanity at large.

This comparatively small community has a background of unforgettable achievements. While, on the one side, the Memons have been acknowledged as one of the leading communities in the field of trade and industry, they have also distinguished themselves in the spheres of politics, religion, social service, and literature.

The Memons have contributed heavily to the enrichment and propagation of literature in the Urdu, Arabic, English, Gujrati and Sindhi languages.

Maulana Mohammad Junagadhi was the first to render Tafseer Ibn-e-Kaseer and Khutbaat-e-Mohammadi in Urdu. Maulana Yaqoob Hasan, a Memon journalist who was in the vanguard of the independence movement, wrote Kitab-ul-Huda, a tafseer of the Holy Qur'an in Urdu.

Besides religious literature, the list of Memon contributors to other branches of Urdu literature, like the short story, the novel, poetry and journalism also includes the names of such illustrious women as Sultana Mehr of Karachi and Mumtaz Nikhat of Bombay. Mumtaz Erum Hussain has written "Asas-e-Ta'leem", a book for the students of the B.A. and M.A. classes according to the current syllabus of the Karachi University.

Professor Abdul Aziz Memon, a scholar of Arabic who is well known throughout the Arab world



as "Al Memoni", has authored research works in Arabic which have become part of the prescribed curricula in the Arab countries. The Government of Pakistan awarded, in 1965 the medal of Pride of Performance to Professor Abdul Aziz ("Al Memoni") Memon in recognition of his services to the Arabic language.

In the Gujrati language, Yousuf Abdul Ghani Marvia played a distinctive role as a journalist in awakening the Muslim masses of Kathiawar and during the Pakistan Movement. At that time he was publishing the weekly "Mujahid" from Junagadh city (Kathiawar). His writings for the Pakistan Movement made a tremendous impact on the Muslims of Kathiawar. When India annexed Junagadh, he was sentenced to three years of imprisonment.

Another Memon journalist and novelist, Noor Mohammad Jamal Noor has written about 20 Gujrati novels based on the Muslim social themes. He also served for a number of years as Editor of Dawn (Gujrati) and the daily "Watan" (Gujrati) of Karachi. Yousuf Mohammadi was Editor of Dawn (Gujrati). In 1965 he became the General Manager of the Urdu daily "Anjam" and from 1968 to-date he has been working as the Business Manager of the English daily "Business Recorder".

The roster of Memon journalists and men of letters includes, besides, such names as Mohammad Usman Shabnam, Umer Abdur Rahman, Ali Mohammad Pirani, Mohammad Siddiq Polani, Ilyas Gadit, Kam-lani, Habib Lakhani, Noor Mohammad Golibar, Adam Noor and Ijin Dhorajwi.

On the side of Sindhi literature, some of the shining examples of Memon contribution are, for instance, Mohammad Usman Diplai, an author and journalist who wrote more than a hundred and fifty books on subjects ranging from religion, history, and politics to psychology, linguistics, ethics, phy-



sics and a number of other diverse topics. The Sindhi daily "Ibrat", founded by Diplai, is even today a largely circulated daily newspaper of Sind. Sirajul Haq Memon, who has been the Editor of the Sindhi daily, the "Hilal-e-Pakistan", for a number of years, also has to his credit more than half a dozen Sindhi books of a very high standard. The name of Karim Bakhsh Khalid also needs no introduction. He has edited the Sindhi monthly "Paigham" and the Urdu magazine "Izhar". Besides, he has also authored a number of Sindhi books on researched and scholarly subjects. Another illustrious son of this community, Dr. Abdul Majeed Memon was awarded Tamgha-e-Imtiaz (T.I.) in 1982 by the Government of Pakistan in recognition of his services to the Sindhi language.

In the political field, too, the Memon community has been second to none. Right from the Independence and Khilafat Movements, and all through the political awakening of the sub-continent's Muslims culminating in the Pakistan Movement, the intensity of feeling and sincerity of purpose displayed by the Memon community is writ large in the history of the sub-continent. Indeed, some of the gestures of sincerity of members of this community had become legend in their own lifetime.

As the President of the All-India Central Khilafat Committee, Mian Jan Mohammad Chhotani rendered priceless services selflessly. A number of Memon stalwarts including leaders like Umer Subani and Yaqub Hasan were in the forefront of the Independence Movement.

Again, the Memon community's contribution to factors leading to the establishment of Pakistan is very significant. During the Pakistan Movement, Quaid-e-Azam's lieutenants included such celebrities as Sir Abdullah Haroon, Haji Abdus Sattar Seth, Sir Adamjee, Haji Omer Matcheswala and Usman Esabhai Memon. Under the guidance of these lea-



ders, the Memon community took a leading part in the Pakistan Movement. It was this factor that prompted the Quaid-e-Azam to declare, in 1938, in Calcutta that the Memons were a front-ranking community of courageous and imaginative traders who knew the difference between profit and loss. That there was an awakening in that community and it had interestedly started to participate in politics. He said it was a happy augury that that community had declared its support for the Muslim League. Because of that, he added, he was confident that the programme he had adopted for Muslims would benefit them.

After the establishment of Pakistan, the Memon community continued to serve this new Muslim country. Yusuf Haroon served as the Chief Minister of Sind. His younger brother, Mahmood Haroon has served first as Minister for Food and later as the Minister for Interior in the Central Cabinet.

Zakaria Kamdar has held a portfolio at the Centre as the Minister for Haj Affairs. Ghulam Nabi Memon was West Pakistan's Minister for Law. And Ashraf Tabani has been Sind's Minister for Finance. Even at the present time, Ashraf W. Tabani is serving the province of Sind as its Governor. Zain Noorani has for quite some time been serving this country as its Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Haji Hanif Tayyeb, who was previously the Minister for Labour and Overseas Pakistanis, is currently serving as the Federal Minister for Works and Housing. And Zakaria Kamdar is presently serving as Prime Minister Mohammad Khan Junejo's Advisor for Haj Affairs.

Even in Bharat, a Memon, Babu Bhai Supariwala is the Minister for Supply in the state of Gujrat.

The Memon community has also contributed its mite to the cause of spreading education among



the Muslim masses of the sub-continent. About a hundred years back, Hassanaly Effendi Memon founded the Sind Madressah-tul-Islam for the express purpose of educating the Muslim youth. And it was this institution that has the signal honour of imparting his early education to the Quaid-e-Azam.

When the Muslim University of Aligarh was founded, Muslims from all over U.P., Punjab and some other provinces of India contributed generously to generate the much-needed funds to run it. The Memons of Bombay, Gujrat, Kathiawar and Burma were not to lag behind in this worthy cause. They funded it to the tune of several lacs of rupees.

The Memon community has been behind the establishment of numerous primary and secondary schools, colleges, hospitals and orphanages. As early as 1910, Sir Yusuf established the sub-continent's first marine college--- the "Nautical and Technical Institute"---- at Nhava Island near Bombay. Then, in 1930 the Ismail Yousuf College was founded in Andheri, a suburb of Bombay. Even before that, in 1920, the Haji Sabu Siddiq Technical Boys School was established in Bombay proper.

After the establishment of Pakistan, the Adamjee family funded the establishment of the Adamjee Science College. A few years later, a Rs. 50 lakhs grant from the Dawood family resulted in the establishment of Dawood College of Engineering and Technology. The foundation stones of both these institutions of learning were laid at the hands of the late Field Marshal Mohammad Ayub Khan. The year 1963 saw the establishment of Abdullah Haroon College with funds donated by the Abdullah Haroon Association. In 1965 the Ayesha Bawani Trust established a college called the Ayesha Bawani Academy. During the same year, the Pakistan Memon Women's Educational Society went for the establishment of the Raunaq-e-Islam Girls College. In 1976, the Hus-



sain Ebrahim Foundation's grant of Rs.50 lakhs made possible the establishment of the Husain Ebrahim Jamal Post-Graduate Institute of Chemistry at the Karachi University.

Before the educational institutions were nationalized, in 1972, 91 schools were running under the administration of the Memon community. After the denationalization of schools, in 1984, the Memon community is administering 70 schools and thus serving the cause of education.

The medical institutions and health facilities that stand to the credit of the Memon community include, among others:

1). Fatima Bano Hospital (Bombay); Noor Hospital (Bombay); 3). Haji Ismail Hospital for Women and Children (Bangalore); 4). Ghousia Hospital (Bangalore); 5). Faqeer Mohammad Hospital (Ootacamond); 6). Janoo Hassan Hospital (Dhoraji, Bharat); 7). Memon Hospital (Hyderabad, Sind); 8). Bantva Memon Hospital (Karachi); 9). Cure Centre Hospital (Sukkur); 10). Rajkot Memon Hospital (Karachi); and 12). Dhoraji Khidmat Committee Dawakhana (Karachi).

The orphanages established by the Memon community include:

1). Zakaria Patel Orphanage (Bombay); 2). Dadar Orphanage (Bombay); 3). Kutchi Memon Orphanage (Bombay); 4). Abdullah Dawood Orphanage (for Girls) (Bombay); 5). Abdullah Haroon Orphanage (Karachi); 6). Hussaini Orphanage (Karachi); 7). Safoora Bai Memon Girls Boarding House (Karachi); 8). Edhi Mohtaj Khana (for Muslims and Non-Muslims).

In 1982, the well-known industrialist, Mr. Ghulam Mohammad Fecto, donated Rs.50 lacs for the establishment of a polytechnic institute in Lahore.



Personalities from the Memon community have earned fame and respect both within Pakistan and abroad for their notable contributions to the social and philanthropic fields. Seth Ahmed Dawood was decorated with Hilal-e-Pakistan, by the Government of Pakistan, for his social and educational services. Sitara-e-Khidmat was awarded to Mr. Mohammad Ali Rangoonwala who served the business community for ten years as President of Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry. Mr. Kasim Dada, who was also the District Governor of Rotary International for a long time, was honoured with Sitara-e-Khidmat. Hajiani Khadija Bai was awarded several medals in recognition of her services to the cause of education. Haji Mohammad Siddiq Polani, who was associated with the Bantva Memon Association for about 25 years was, in 1978, made the Chairman of Ebrahim Alibhai Charitable Trust. Prominent industrialist, Mr. Abdullah Dadabhoy, who has earned himself a place of honour with his contributions to the social and public welfare fields presently holds the prestigious office of General Secretary Motamar-e-Alam-e-Islami. Mr. Abdul Jabbar Khamisani, well known businessman and ex-President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry was, in 1984, nominated by the Government as a member of the Sind Council. Mr. Ahmed E.H. Jaffer has been the Chairman of Pakistan Islamic Council for International Affairs. The late Mr. Abdul Sattar Teli Pakolawala extended his fullest cooperation for the settlement of the community in Karachi. Haji Aziz Kayan also made significant contributions to the fields of settlement and public welfare. Mr. Noor Mohammad Urooswala is serving the public by being associated simultaneously with several social service organizations. Mr. Mohammad Hussain Mehnati has been the Chairman of the Finance Committee of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation. Mr Abdul Ghaffar Teli is also serving people from the platform of Rotary International. Mr. Ashraf Walimohammad Tabani, who has also been Chairman of the Fisheries Board, the Cotton Board, and the Industrial Development Bank



of Pakistan, is presently serving as the Governor of Sind. Another prominent member of the community, Mr. Abdul Ghaffar Lakhani made, in 1983, a contribution of Rs.20 lacs to the Aga Khan Medical University. And it is still fresh in our memories that during the 1965 war, the Memon community had contributed Rs. 2 crores to the Defence Fund.



## 24 HOURS AMBULANCE SERVICE EMERGENCY CENTRES IN KARACHI AND PAKISTAN

1.	Mithadar	22 52 25 22 64 42
2.	Mosa Line	74 49 44 74 48 64
3.	Kharadar	22 10 37
4.	Edhi Home Sohrab Goth	68 34 32 67 44 84
5.	North Karachi	65 45 07 65 16 63
6.	Nazimabad	61 18 11
7.	Qasba	61 82 08
8.	Korangi	31 19 10
9.	Landhi	
10.	Malir	
11.	Drig Colony	
12.	Bahadur Abad	42 33 34
13.	Clifton	53 99 22
14.	Kemari	
15.	Civil Hospital	
16.	Jinnah Hospital	
17.	Abbasi Shaeed Hospital,	



18.	Jacob Line	
19.	Manora	
20.	Hub Chowki	
21.	Guro Mandar	
22.	Islamabad - R. Pindi	82 78 44
23.	Peshawar	6 4 5 7 5
24.	Hyderabad	2 5 8 2 2
25.	Moro	
26.	Sukkur	8 5 7 1 1 8 5 7 7 9
27.	Sibbi	
28.	Quetta	7 2 4 9 7
29.	Multan	3 1 2 4 8
30.	Rahim Yar Khan	
31.	Sahiwal	
32.	Lahore	41 71 36 41 71 76
33.	Jhelum	
34.	Mir Pur Khas	2 4 4 4
35.	Thatta	3 1 0
36.	Larkana	
37.	Dadu	
38.	Faisalabad	





## EDHI OF PAKISTAN

Abdus Sattar Edhi was born on 28th December, 1932, in Bantva, a village in Gujrat, India. Engaged himself in regular social service in 1949. From 1949 to 1974 worked with different organizations like Bantva Memon Seva Samiti, Bantva Volunteer Corps, Young Muslim Association, Madinah Welfare Association and Madinah Trust etc.

In 1954 set up his own dispensary under Bantva Volunteer Corps. Bought his first Ambulance Van in 1959 for Rs. 2,400/- and learned driving in 1960. In 1966 married Bilqees who was a trainee in his dispensary. Founded Edhi Welfare Centre on 28th November, 1974. Edhi Trust was established by him with a fund of Rs. 5,000/- only. Today its Annual Budget has touched the figure of 50 Million Rupees.

Maulana lives a very simple life. His breakfast consists of left-over loaf of bread baked one day earlier. For 40 years his dress has been Kurta and Pyjama made of gray cloth. Never at any time has he possessed more than two such pairs. A pair of chappals made of plastic material covers his feet and it is changed after a year and a half when it begins to give out. For the past 40 years he has been using one of the wooden benches in his dispensary to sleep on.

As a member of Majlis-e-Shoora (Federal Legislature Council), he never used the privileges of a V.L.P., nor posed as such. He charged no travelling allowance or daily allowance for attending its meetings and always travelled in second class (lower class) Railway compartment. He stayed in a hotel where the room tariff was only Rs. 15/- a day. He would travel by public buses to go to the Assembly Hall.

Never in his 40 years of social service has he knocked any door for donations. During the fasting month of Ramazan, people stand in a queue waiting for their turn to give donations.

He is the first individual of the Muslim World who has given GHUSL (prescribed bath) with his own hands to about 20,000 unclaimed dead bodies and arranged their burial. Edhi Trust now has a fleet of 175 ambulances vans attached to 24 Centres in Karachi and 10 Centres in other cities of Pakistan. About 2,000 unclaimed or abandoned children, orphans and disabled or distressed men and women are lodged in Edhi Centres where they are fed and clothed and given medical care -- all without any charge. His wife, Bilqees, assists him in most of his social work.

In the field of social service and humanitarian work, the Edhi Trust is perhaps the first establishment whose budget has increased ten thousand times in 13 years without any aid or grant from the Government.